NEA Today

September 1998
Vol. 17, No. 1
Washington, D.C.

The Newspaper for Members of the National Education Association

Turn this page for a special poster celebrating ESP work on behalf of quality public education.

Welcome to a New School Year & a New NEA Today

with more tips, more ideas, and more resources to help education support staff help students succeed.

See our new ESP Extra section inside!

ESP Extra

A Job Well Done

Arkansas paraprofessional Laura Mo
local parent Sheryl Doutt and her so

Linking Home & School

This home/school consultant is living proof that ESP folks make a difference for kids every day.

Name:
Laura Montgomery

Job title:
Home/school consultant

Experience:
11 years

NEA local affiliate:
Pulaski (Arkansas) Association of Support Staff

What people don't understand about my job:
Nobody knows if I'm a counselor, a teacher, or a social worker.

What I do:
I'm a liaison between parents and school. I identify disadvantaged students, increase their parents' educational

administrators and teachers into contact with these parents.

I make home visits to help disadvantaged families meet their needs—from school supplies and food to medical care for the kids and GEDs and jobs for the parents.

I also do things like run parent group sessions, drive children to the dentist, and bring parents to school for conferences and tours.

My credentials:
A Bachelor's degree and license in social work

Continuing education:
I've completed 18 hours of work toward a Master's in counseling and attend numerous workshops to maintain my social work license, including a recent two-day session in crisis counseling.

How I help students achieve:
I take homework to sick children, deliver materials like pencils and paper to the home, and help parents develop their children's study skills—using both videos and "one-on-ones" on how to help a child do homework.

And, to help disadvantaged children gain social skills, I established a very effective "Adopt a Child" program that enables a stable family to take a child to events like movies, family gatherings, or religious services.

A challenge I have met:
When I started this job, I saw a brother and sister eat out of a trash can. Through a home visit, I found that their mother and other siblings were locked in the house by an abusive, alcoholic father and lacked both food and utilities.

I did lots of referrals, found a new residence for the family, helped the mom establish an income, and got

five children tested for skills and p

Tips from

On Kids &

On dealing with kid
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—and use them.

It's Quality Public Everyo

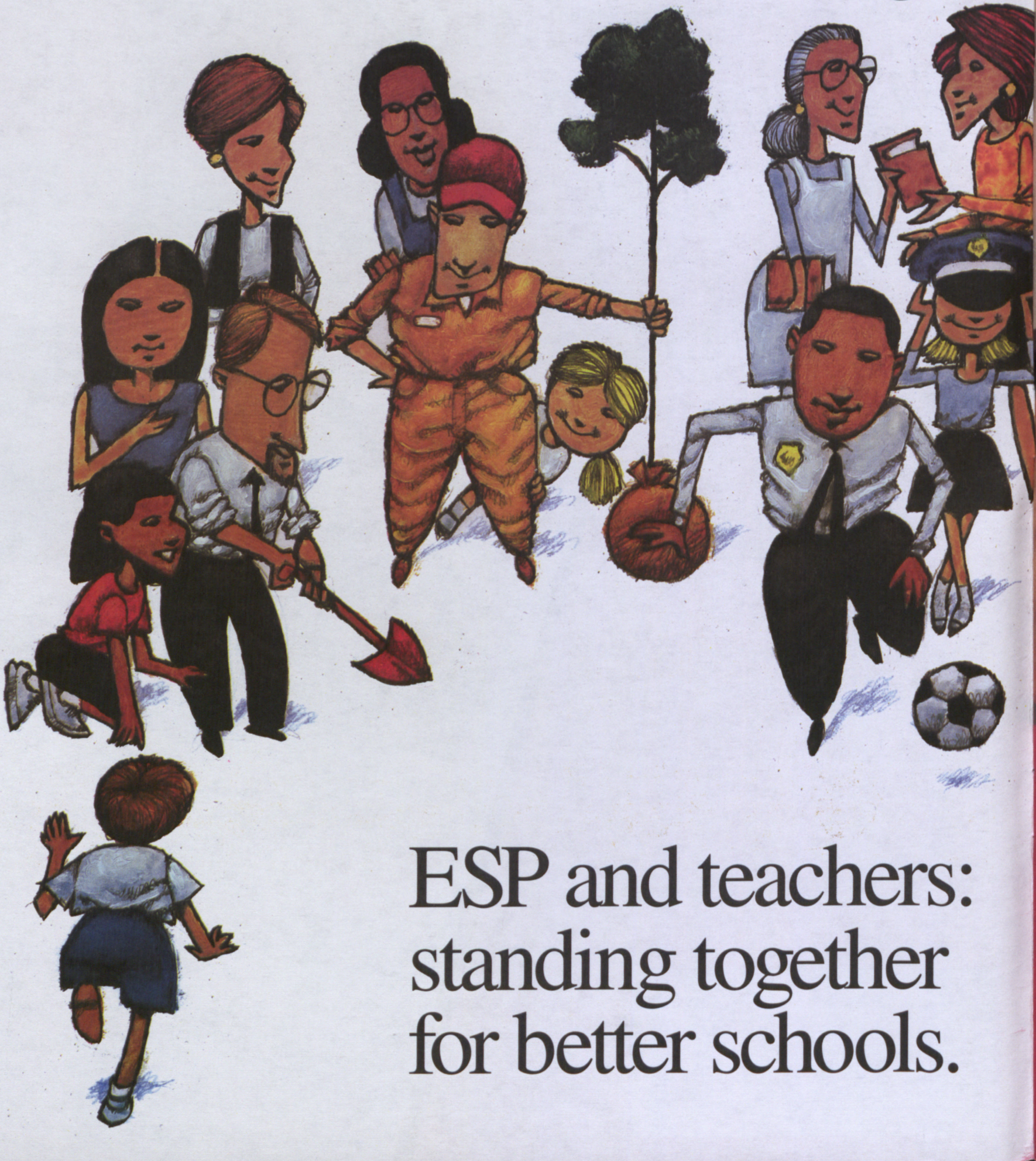

Illustration by Ted Pitts

ESP and teachers: standing together for better schools.

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Classroom Harmony

10 Discipline Tips for Starting the Year Off Right

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Tennessee music teacher Vincent Dial

NEA Today

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GCU 1097M

recycled paper

Full Speed Ahead!

President's Viewpoint

After the unity vote, charting the course for a new NEA of deeds, not words.

Bob Chase

Democracy is alive and feisty within the National Education Association. For first-hand testimony, ask any of the nearly 10,000 delegates to the 1998 Representative Assembly, held this past July in New Orleans.

Front-page headlines told the big news from this year's RA: "Teachers Reject Merger of Unions" (*The New York Times*, July 6).

But beyond the headlines is an equally important story: Our NEA family passionately debated a momentous issue. We did so in a way that was always substantive and civil. And in the end, while delegates voted down the "Principles of Unity," they dramatically reaffirmed the unity and strength of our NEA family.

Of course, the delegates also kept alive the dream of bringing together America's public school employees in a single organization.

"The Representative Assembly affirms its historic commitment to the concept of unity with the American Federation of Teachers," said New Business Item 1, which delegates passed July 6.

In the same breath, delegates made it clear that any new, united organization must preserve NEA's robust brand of member democracy.

I share these goals. But let me be very clear: Our ongoing pursuit of unification with AFT must not in any way distract us from the urgent work of creating a new NEA.

By all means, we will continue to fight for decent pay and working conditions and to defend the rights of our members. But our New Unionism means doing more.

We must address the full range of our members' professional needs and aspirations, from professional development to mentoring to peer assistance, and much more. And, wherever possible, we must work cooperatively with management to boost school quality and student achievement.

Our challenge is to put the "move" in the movement to revitalize public education. Bear in mind that NEA is not a tea-and-crumpets society. We are a union and an advocacy organization. We are about making a real, tangible, practical difference.

> "Our challenge is to put the '*move*' back in the movement to revitalize public education."

In the months ahead, I will be pushing the Association to embrace major, nationwide initiatives designed to advance NEA's quality agenda in big ways. Among the proposals on the table are the following:

■ **Creating a "new deal" for first-year teachers**, including high-quality mentoring, intensive professional development (as much as 20 percent of a new teacher's schedule) tailored specifically to the needs of new teachers, and an end to the practice of assigning first-year teachers to the worst classes in the worst schools.

■ **Helping 100,000 NEA members achieve National Board certification.** Others have proclaimed this lofty goal, but only NEA has the resources and heft to make it happen. We can provide technical support to candidates at every step of the certification process, while lobbying states to provide financial incentives to teachers who achieve certification. Florida already offers a salary premium of up to 20 percent.

■ **Championing universal literacy by the end of third grade**. Building on Read Across America, NEA can spearhead a nationwide campaign to guarantee that every child is able to read by the end of third grade.

This campaign would focus on top-quality professional development for early reading teachers, reduced class sizes in first and second grade, and an end to the social promotion of elementary pupils who can't read.

■ **Rescuing low-performing schools.** NEA can become a leader in helping to turn around failing schools. This would include early intervention by NEA technical assistance teams, plus—in extreme cases—cooperation in efforts to "reconstitute" failed schools.

These are just four proposals—I encourage you to send me a letter or E-mail with your own ideas.

But time is short. We must choose a cluster of priority initiatives—and we must act soon. NEA must lead in setting a national agenda—that's what New Unionism is all about. We must follow the many pioneering affiliates that are creating a new NEA of deeds, not words.

William Butler Yeats said that "teaching is not filling up a pail, it is lighting a fire." Likewise, our great Association must go beyond the important work of traditional unions. We must also light fires.

The good news is that the match is already struck. It is time, now, to add the kindling.

Comments? You can E-mail me directly at BobChase@nea.org.

NEA at a Glance

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Did You Know...
That NEA and the American Federation of Teachers last year began a 30-member Joint Council to coordinate common initiatives around the crucial topics of teacher quality, school discipline, and school infrastructure. Both NEA and the AFT renewed this commitment to Joint Council cooperation at their conventions this past July.

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NEA Today September '98

Dealing With School Violence

No one wants to see a repeat of the school shootings that made last spring such a difficult time for so many educators. So, in this issue of *NEA Today*, you'll find considerable soul-searching on violence in our schools. Look for legislative solutions (page 8), school safety plans (page 19), insights into student rage (page 26), legal answers (page 27), and thoughts from the best friend of one of the teachers killed last April (page 57).

Cover Story

Craig Line

4 Start Smart!

Got discipline on your mind? This month's cover story collects tips from dozens of discipline experts around the country—experts like Vermont paraeducator Lyncca Perkins (above), who's got a great new idea for controlling discipline on the playground. Plus, see page 6 for expert answers to some of your toughest discipline questions.

Cover photo by Miles Cary

Newsmakers

7 At the 1998 RA

Delegates to NEA's annual convention reject a proposed merger with AFT, then vote to put unity back on track.

8 In the Nation

Kids shouldn't have to mourn teachers and friends shot at school. In Washington, a group of senators look for ways to stem the violence.

9 On Capitol Hill

Check the rumors at the door. Get the real scoop on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act here.

10 In the States

Score one for NEA members in California. But the fight against "paycheck protection" isn't over.

Next Month . . .

Coverage of the Second World Congress of the Education International, held July 25-29 in Washington, D.C., will appear in next month's *NEA Today*.

Learning

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Find out how NEA member Arturo Hernandez broke the cycle of gang violence in South Central Los Angeles.

19 Inside Scoop

If you're looking for ways to make your school safer, check out this quick look at innovative approaches to school security.

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How do you get reluctant parents to come to back-to-school night? Tips to tempt them.

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As more educators get wired, *NEA Today* includes more favorite Web sites, CD-ROMs, and high-tech lesson plans.

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A complete, up-to-date, 16-page listing of all resolutions adopted by delegates to the 1998 NEA Representative Assembly.

Life

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Cookies or Brownies? Cold turkey or raw chicken? AAA or AA? Start the new year off laughing, as educators remember a few confused kids.

52 People

It's one way to keep folks in line—and in shape. Idaho teacher Karla Harman's got kids and teachers inline skating in the halls of Moscow High School.

54 Money

Can you afford long-term care insurance? Montana educator John Board and his wife (below) decided they couldn't afford the alternative.

Voices

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A Pennsylvania teacher honors the memory of a colleague killed doing something that he loved—teaching.

58 Meet

Find out how these two academics—Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Cornel West—plan to organize parents into an effective strike force for kids.

59 Debate

Should schools sell cola companies exclusive rights? NEA members from Texas and Wisconsin take sides.

61 Books

An Illinois teacher reviews two inspirational books—Herbert Kohl's *The Discipline of Hope* and Parker Palmer's *The Courage To Teach*.

62 Letters

Your thoughts on school violence, plus a warning from an Arizona educator about the growth of charter schools.

Start Smart!

You'd think a 5'8," 280-pound former NFL player would have few troublemakers in the classroom. But music teacher Vincent Dial gets his fair share. "I had a student curse me out in a letter he passed around the classroom," says Dial, who teaches band to 60 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders at Liberty Middle School in Johnson City, Tennessee.

A former pro football player for the Kansas City Chiefs, Dial says he doesn't use his size to intimidate. He doesn't need to.

"From day one I let my students know I mean business by using a firm tone," Dial explains. "And I lay out my expectations for their behavior in a written document that both students and parents must sign."

No classroom is free of discipline problems. But educators like Dial, who start the school year with firm strategies for handling student misbehavior, spend more time teaching and less time reprimanding.

After interviewing dozens of discipline experts—both in and out of the classroom—*NEA Today*'s Karen Gutloff has compiled this list of 10 ways educators can get a handle on discipline at the start of the school year.

From the preventive to the incentive, veterans may recognize many of these strategies. But, as most will tell their students, it never hurts to review the basics—especially when it comes to discipline.

By using behavior contracts, music teacher Vincent Dial conducts a harmonious class.

Miles Cary

1 Limit Idle Time

First grade teacher Karen Cook calls recess, lunch time, bathroom breaks, and other transition periods "prime time for student misbehavior."

"I try not to be busy as kids are reentering the room from recess," says Cook, who teaches in Madison, Wisconsin. "I keep the routine consistent by having an immediate activity ready for them to tackle."

One example: Cook has students write two sentences on the board, while she takes a minute to get organized for the next activity.

This strategy can work in the upper grades as well.

"I don't let students do a lot of chit-chat during the two to three minutes before the bell rings," says Budd Churchward, a computer and math teacher at Key Peninsula Middle School in Washington State.

"I always have math problems on an overhead projector. My students know to start on them when they enter the room. This way, I don't start class shouting at the kids to be quiet."

Adds Churchward, creator of "The Honor Level System," a discipline program adopted in schools across the country: "They're now so used to this, if I forget, they turn on the projector themselves."

2 Let Kids Make the Rules

In David Chia's fourth grade classroom, students help make and enforce the rules.

"I stress this isn't Mr. Chia's class, this is our class,"says Chia, who works at Georgian Forest Elementary School in Wheaton, Maryland.

"Together, we make up a list of expected behaviors and rules to enforce those behaviors. This gives students ownership," says Chia, who was honored this year with an outstanding teaching award.

"Now, when someone breaks a rule, another student will admonish them and say, 'Hey, *we* decided that everyone should use a hall pass.'"

Manuel Mateo uses this approach in his English class at Franklin High School in Portland, Oregon.

"The kids get excited about having a say in creating a safe zone within the classroom. They realize, 'If it's our thing and it's being abused, we're hurting ourselves.'"

3 Make Parents Allies

If your first contact with parents is in late October, when you have bad news to report, you're likely to get a frosty reception.

Parents are more likely to reinforce your expectations for good student behavior if you establish ties early.

"Communicating with parents ensures that expectations and consequences are

Ten Tips for Establishing Harmony in the Classroom

consistent between home and school," says Maryland's David Chia.

"I contact parents on the first day of school to introduce myself. This way I know what to expect when I have to call them to report behavior problems," he continues.

"I find the initial contacts make them more receptive to listening and supporting me."

4 Spell It Out in Writing

Parents can only reinforce your class rules and expectations if you let them know what they are.

That's why Tennessee teacher Vincent Dial hands out a behavior contract on the first day of school. The contract requires the signature of both the student and parent.

"I list the specific behaviors I expect in the contract," says Dial. "For example, the contract says 'I expect you to hand in assignments on time, to respect yourself and your neighbor, and to not talk out of turn.'"

The contract also spells out penalties for student misbehavior, from reduced grades to eventual dismissal from the school band.

"The student who wrote the letter about me was taken out of the class," Dial reports. "There was no way he could argue the point because the expectations had been spelled out in writing and signed."

In Manuel Mateo's high school English class in Oregon, behavior contracts help parents see disciplinary actions as fair.

"If the contract is followed consistently, parents understand the teacher is not 'picking on their kid,'" Mateo says. "It's part of a written expectation.

"Contracts also set up a way to have a professional relationship with high school students," Mateo adds. "It echoes what's expected in the real world. There are consequences to not living up to your end of the contract."

5 Give Respect To Get Respect

Doris Dempsey, an elementary teacher in Denver, Colorado, uses the Golden Rule to ward off student misbehavior.

"When you treat students with respect, you get it back," says Dempsey, author of *Classroom Discipline Made Easy*.

Dempsey says giving students respect doesn't mean giving up power. "You can be friendly, but authoritative. I might say to a child, 'You can finish your conversation at lunch time. Right now, I need you to pay attention to me.'

"I don't say 'shut up' or other things to hurt a child's feelings," she adds. "That just makes things escalate."

Roberto Gallegos, an English teacher at Garfield High School in Los Angeles, California, often observes new colleagues trying to get respect by becoming friends with students.

"Familiarity is a double-edged sword," Gallegos says. "I don't allow students to call me by my first name.

"If you become a friend to a student, and a discipline issue occurs," he says, "there's a conflict of interest."

6 Model the Behavior You Want

At Westside Elementary School in Daytona Beach, Florida, teachers and support staff don't just tell students how to behave—they show them.

"In the first week of school, staff practice the desired behavior with students until they get it right," explains school secretary Barbara Reedy.

Each week, a skill such as "ask permission" is announced over the PA system. Teachers then do a lesson on that skill.

"We've even developed skits in which proper behavior is modeled for students," Reedy says. The skits are performed at schoolwide assemblies during the first week of school.

Wisconsin's Karen Cook says dramatic skits and modeling help empower her first graders to handle conflict in nondisruptive ways.

For example, Cook has students act out how they might respond when a peer interrupts their work. "They know to hold their hand as a stop sign and say, 'Would you not talk to me? I'm working.'"

Adds Cook: "Drama gives kids some model of how to respond when things go wrong. It empowers them to be responsible when someone else is acting inappropriately."

7 Get Up and Move Around

Dixie Coutant, an art teacher at Sierra Vista High School in Baldwin Park, California, has 36 students in one class, but manages to keep close tabs on them all.

"I don't have a desk, and I move around the room constantly, so I can see what's going on," Coutant says. "Because I move around so much, problems get nipped in the bud. I can easily spot the kids who are causing problems."

Adds Washington teacher Budd Churchward: "An effective teacher will make a pass through the whole room about two minutes after the students have started a written assignment. Students who are not on task will be quick to get going as they see you approach."

8 Structure Play at Recess

Fairfield School in Vermont has an innovative way to deal with kids who tease, taunt, or hit peers during recess.

Kids who make trouble on the playground are first sent to school counselor Maggie Evans to discuss what went wrong and how the child can change behavior.

If there's no improvement, the student is placed in structured recess under the watchful eye of paraeducator Lyncca Perkins.

"Until these kids prove they can play without fighting, they participate in organized games," explains Perkins, who developed the playground discipline program.

"I'm right there in the midst of their play to solve problems and settle disputes," she adds. "And I help choose sports teams to give every kid a fair chance and to limit fights and hurt feelings."

Close engagement in student play allows Perkins to jump in quickly when tempers are about to flare.

"I can remove the child who's getting angry before a fight begins," she says.

Once kids learn to manage their behavior in closely supervised, structured play, Perkins adds, they're free to participate in the playground activities they choose.

Craig Line

Vermont paraeducator Lyncca Perkins maintains order on the playground by putting troublemakers in "structured recess" until they straighten out.

9 Bring Kids To Order Quickly

Non-verbal signals are a great way to cue students that noise levels and behavior are getting out of control and to prevent classroom problems from escalating.

"I never go home with a sore throat from trying to shout over teenagers," says California high school teacher Roberto Gallegos.

"But you do need an attention grabber every now and then," he says.

"There should be some kind of nonverbal signal that says, 'I need your undivided attention,' 'I want you to put your materials aside,' 'I want eye contact,' or 'I want you to be writing,'" says Gallegos.

He favors chimes to get his students' attention.

10 Praise the Behavior You Want

It's important to acknowledge and praise good behavior whenever you see it.

This is especially effective in the younger grades, according to Wisconsin first grade teacher Karen Cook.

"When I spot appropriate behavior, I might say 'Look at Table 1. Their eyes are up, and their ears are listening.' Then I'll ask Table 2 to practice that."

On the middle school level, Washington teacher Budd Churchward says he uses "classroom rules that describe the behaviors I want, instead of listing things students cannot do."

One example: "Instead of saying 'No running in the room,' I say 'Move through the building in an orderly manner.'

"Kids," Churchward says, "respond well to positive reinforcement."

—Also contributing to this article: Amanda Karsten and Michelle Tucker

Dear Dr. Discipline . . .

When it comes to discipline issues, there's no one right answer. So, NEA Today *staff assembled a team of four experts (see box below) to answer common questions educators have about managing student misbehavior.*

Is it a good idea to offer incentives to my students in exchange for good behavior?

—Candy Jar

Budd Churchward: Incentives may be appropriate for younger kids and special needs kids. For older students, I'd rather honor good behavior than offer incentives.
Ken Kosier: Verbal approval, smiles, and pats on the back are crucial to maintaining positive motivation. You can also create special activities to encourage the whole class to complete a project.
Doris Dempsey: Too many incentives can suggest low expectations. Students begin to think they can't do well without the candy or the star.

Is it possible to have too many rules for students to follow?

—Etta Kitt

Shirley Howard: Yes. If you have too many rules, you start to confuse students. The fewer you have, the more they will understand. When kids question the rules, explain that the rules are in place for their safety and protection.
Kosier: I think seven or eight rules is appropriate. But make sure they are specific. Don't say "respect the rights of others." Tell students what that means—no hitting, no interrupting.

A student complains I'm picking on him when I enforce the rules. What should I do?

—Wanda B. Nice

Dempsey: If you are, admit it, apologize, and stop. If you're not, have a private chat to restate your expectations, kindly but authoritatively. Don't get into a power struggle or argument.
Kosier: You should have a behavior management plan that spells out rules, expectations, and penalties for breaking rules. The plan should be posted and discussed often. The next time the student complains that you're being unfair, remind him of the posted rules.
Churchward: Show this student how other kids respond to your discipline. When other students misbehave, correct them. Have the student who feels picked on watch how peers correct their behavior without complaining.

I have students who talk while I'm teaching. What can I do to put a stop to this?

—Dee Stracted

Dempsey: Move around the room as you teach. Each lesson should require ongoing student participation, so kids don't have time to talk. When you're writing, they should be writing.

Yesterday, a parent told me she disagrees with my classroom rules. What can I do?

—Con Frontation

Dempsey: I'd set up a conference right away so the problem doesn't fester. Clarify the rules in case of misinterpretation, then listen to the parent's views. I would never change anything on the spur of the moment because of what a parent or student says.
Kosier: That's why it's important to have a rationale for each rule and have them preapproved by your administrator. Explain to parents that rules are made to ensure a safe learning environment for every student. Show parents your rules are consistent with the rules of other teachers in the building.

How far should I go in correcting a student's behavior before I refer the problem to my administrator?

—Ann Oyed

Churchward: Create steps in your discipline program that allow students to change their behavior before referral to the principal. For my class, going to the office is step 4. Most kids change their behavior by step 2 or 3.
Kosier: Work out in advance with your administrator which behaviors warrant a visit to the principal's office. Make that part of the behavior management plan you review with students. If students are openly defiant, violent, or threatening, immediately remove them from class and refer the problem to a counselor or administrator.

What can I do with a student who tries to earn points with friends by openly challenging my authority?

—Stan Myground

Howard: I talk to challenging students one-on-one at the end of the bus ride. I ask if they know the rules. I give them a warning that I write a report the next time that behavior occurs.
Kosier: These are students who ride the edge of defiance. I'd tell the student, "I'll respect you, if you respect me." Or you can put the student on the spot by asking the class, "Was that respectful?" Disapproval from the class may stop the behavior.
Churchward: Take students away from their audience. Discuss what they said and discuss the kind of behavior you expect. There's no point in engaging in power games in the classroom.
Dempsey: Don't ignore it and expect the problem to go away. If one kid gets away with that kind of behavior, it can spread, and the rest of the class will view you as weak.

For more practical advice from Dr. Discipline, check NEA Today *on the Web at www.nea.org/neatoday.*

The Doctor Is In

Koster Gilhome

■ **Shirley Howard**
School bus driver in Midland, Texas, and 1997 Texas State Teachers Association ESP of the Year.

■ **Ken Kosier**
School psychologist in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and author of *The Discipline Checklist.*

David Zalbowski

■ **Doris Dempsey**
Elementary teacher in Denver, Colorado, and author of *Classroom Discipline Made Easy.*

■ **Budd Churchward**
Middle school teacher in Key Penninsula, Washington, and creator of "The Honor Level System."

Resources

■ "The Honor Level System," a discipline program designed by middle school teacher Budd Churchward. For details on the Web, check out http://members.aol.com/churchward/hls/HLS_INTRO.HTML. Or contact Churchward at 253/884-4800.

■ *The Discipline Checklist: Advice from 60 Successful Elementary Teachers.* Ken Kosier. Sixty top teachers share their secrets of classroom management and suggestions for motivating today's students. NEA Professional Library. Stock #2152-5-00-F. $4.50 for NEA members, $5.95 for non-members. Call 800/229-4200.

■ *Innovative Discipline.* Teacher-to-Teacher series, NEA Professional Library. Advice from teachers on peer mediation, self-help sessions, and TQM as a discipline strategy. Stock #2904-6-00-F. $9.95 for NEA members, $12.95 for non-members. Call 800/229-4200.

■ *Inspiring Discipline: A Practical Guide for Today's Classrooms.* Merrill Harmin. Strategies you can put to use immediately in your room. NEA Professional Library. Stock #2950-X-00-F. $10.95 for NEA members, $12.95 for non-members. Call 800/229-4200.

■ *Quit It! A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Students in Grades K-3* . Merle Froschl, Barbara Sprung, and Nancy Mullin-Rindler. This practical handbook will help you stop discipline problems before they start. NEA Professional Library. Use stock #1881-8-00-F. $15.95 for NEA members, $19.95 for non-members. Call 800/229-4200.

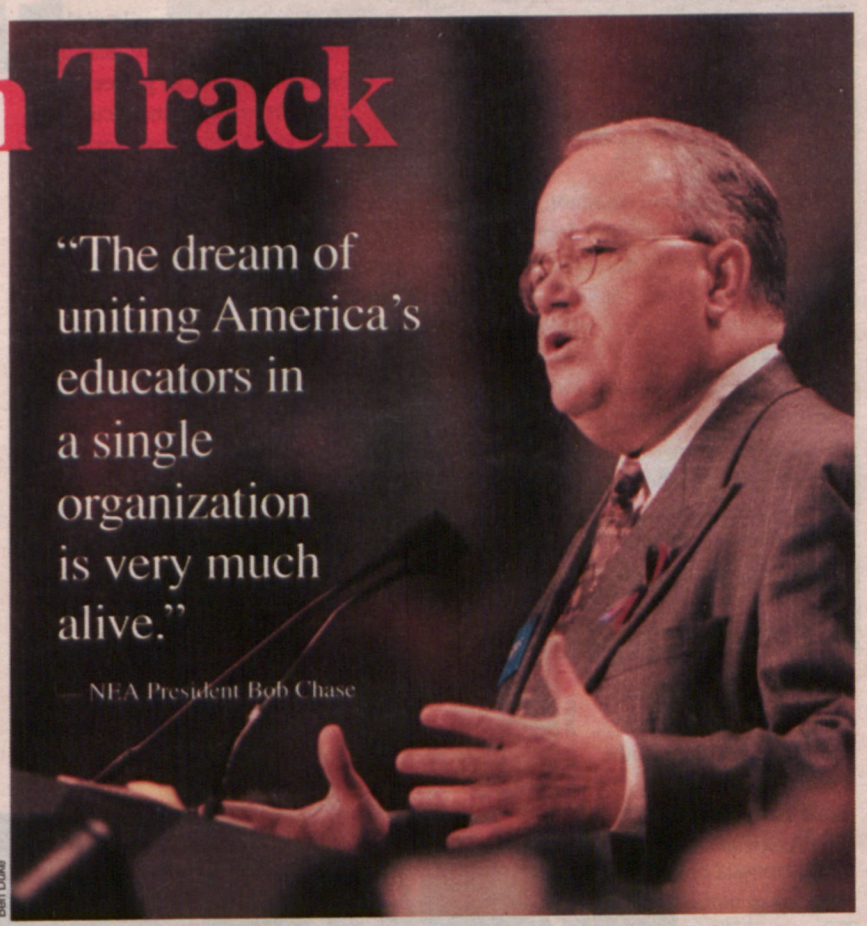
■ *Assertive Discipline: Positive Behavior Management for Today's Classroom* (#1000) and *Behavior Management in the Middle School Classroom* (#1022). Lee Canter. Each $14.95, plus $4.95 s&h for any order under $50. Call 800/254-9660. For details on the Web, go to www.canterweb.com.

■ *Classroom Discipline Made Easy: A System that Works for the Inner City or Any City.* Doris Dempsey. $12.95 plus s&h. To order, call or Fax 303/574-0785 or go to www.mbpages.com/colorado/class.htm.

The 1998 Representative Assembly

Delegates at NEA's annual convention reject a proposed merger agreement between NEA and AFT, then vote to put unity . . .

Back on Track



Ben Duke

New Orleans

Every year, in July, thousands of NEA members—all elected by their colleagues back home—come together for the Association's annual Representative Assembly.

This year the whole nation was watching.

What grabbed the nation's attention—and made front-page headlines almost everywhere—was the historic choice before delegates: whether or not to approve a negotiated agreement that would unite NEA and the American Federation of Teachers into one, national organization.

In the end, after hours of intense debate, the nearly 10,000 delegates voted down—by a 58-42 percent margin—the specific agreement proposed to them, but then, the very next day, voted to reaffirm NEA's commitment to seek unity with the AFT.

This reaffirmation—introduced by delegate Judy Schaubach from Minnesota—sets the stage for continuing cooperation at the national level with AFT. The action also lays out a process for determining how NEA state affiliates ready to unite with their AFT counterparts can do so.

Minnesota is one of four states where NEA and AFT members are eager to unify.

"We want to work together," explained Schaubach. "We don't want to fight."

In fact, as the debate over the proposed national unity agreement made plain, almost no one in NEA wants to fight AFT any more. Almost all delegates who spoke against the proposed national agreement emphasized they were *for* unity, just *against* this particular agreement.

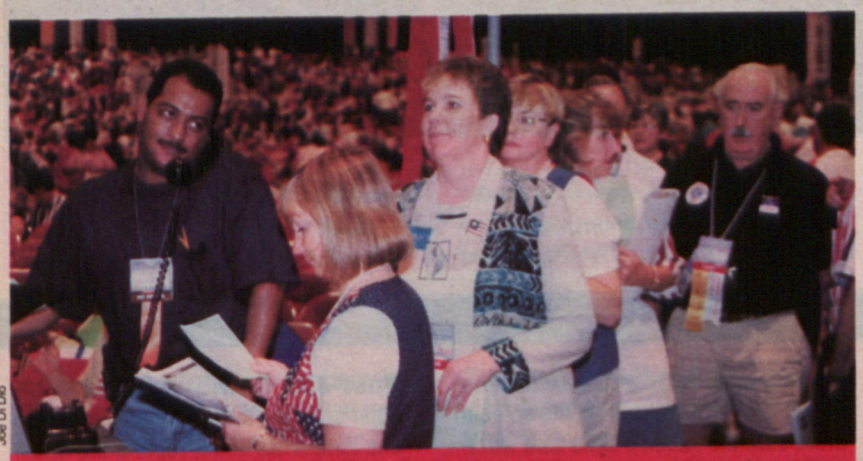
"Everyone said we support unity," as Schaubach put it. "Now we need to get back on track."

What happens next?

NEA will be surveying RA delegates to get their ideas on what sort of concerns should be addressed in any new national unity talks with AFT. Meanwhile, guidelines to permit state-level mergers between NEA and AFT affiliates will be drawn up and presented to the NEA Board of Directors, probably this October.

That's good news to Maureen Dinnen, the incoming president of NEA's Florida state affiliate.

"The RA," she says, "has told us we can continue down our road to unity, and that makes me very happy."



Joe Di Dio

The lines were long on the Assembly floor as delegates waited to speak on unity between NEA and the AFT. In all, delegates spent over five hours debating unity questions.

The '98 RA: See — and Hear — For Yourself!

The 1998 NEA Representative Assembly lasted four days and acted on over 70 different pieces of new business—besides the proposed unity agreement with AFT.

You can find complete coverage of all the RA action, including the re-election of NEA Executive Committee members Denise Rockwell (Woods) of California and Roger Sharp of Indiana, on the NEA Web page.

Just point your browser to www.nea.org/ra. The site even includes the audio of key convention speeches and debates. Also see page 28 for the complete text of the official NEA Resolutions adopted by this year's RA.

Heroes & Zeroes

Late last spring, the E-Rate—the school discount for Internet access and wiring—was almost E-rased by phone company giants, backed by allies in Congress and on talk radio. Under pressure, the Federal Communications Commission nearly halved the 1998 contributions long-distance carriers must make to the E-Rate's universal service fund.

The good news: The E-Rate endures, thanks to counterpressure exerted on the FCC by a bipartisan group of lawmakers. E-normous thanks goes to senators like Robert Kerrey (D-NE), Olympia Snowe (R-ME, above), John Rockefeller (D-WV), Rick Santorum (R-PA), and James Jeffords (R-VT), and House members like Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Bobby Rush (D-IL).

Saving up for a $37 billion merger with WorldCom, Inc., MCI has passed its E-Rate obligation on to residential customers—through a 5 percent monthly surcharge. "You have decided to raise consumers' bills rather than absorb this investment in your ample profit margins," Senator Kerrey chided MCI, "in spite of the fact that your industry has been given substantial reductions in access charges, with more to come."

Jack Carlsen, school technology director in Battle Creek, Michigan, was one of thousands of NEA members who fought to preserve the E-Rate. "This program is essential to building the infrastructure to bring technology to our schools," Carlsen wrote in an E-mail message. "We need the resources to accomplish the challenges the next century is bringing to our doorstep."

The E-Rate fight isn't over. Congressman Tom Bliley Jr. (R-VA), says language to block this program could still be put into an appropriations bill. Government shouldn't pay to wire schools, he says—sending funds to schools is like "feeding pigs."
What you can do: Contact your members of Congress and urge them to back the E-rate.

In the Nation

Needed: Eyes and Ears

After yet another school shooting in May—by a 15-year-old in Springfield, Oregon—NEA President Bob Chase renewed NEA's call for the hiring of adequate numbers of guidance counselors and school nurses in every school "to spot early warning signs of violence before a tragedy occurs."

Added Pennsylvania State Education Association President David Gondak during Senate testimony in May: "We should also tap into one of the most underutilized resources in our schools—support staff. They are far more likely to live in the communities where they work, and they know a lot about kids. School systems ought to train them to help teach kids how to resolve differences without violence."

A Summit on Strategies

NEA will co-sponsor the Joint National School/Community Conference on Youth Violence and Substance Abuse, scheduled for November 19-21 in Orlando, Florida.

The meeting—chaired by LaMar Haynes, director of NEA's Emergency Commission on Urban Children—will be attended by school staff, community workers, law enforcement and school security personnel, religious leaders, parents and students, government representatives, and others.

Conference presenters will address primary prevention and intervention strategies. Topics include drugs, violence, gangs, character education, safe school practices, mentoring, peer mediation, and youth self-discipline.

The early conference registration fee (until September 26) is $280. For details, call 800/537-4903 or go to www.ed.mtu.edu/safe.

What You Can Do

You can start now to make your school a safer place to work and learn. Download *NEA's Safe Schools Manual* at www.nea.org/issues.

The manual includes advice on ways to ensure peace in schools, communities, and families—through school safety committees, safe school plans, models of positive behaviors, and encouragement for parental support for children.

Voices Against the Violence

Prompted by school shootings, a Senate panel solicits advice on how to keep kids and teachers safe.

English teacher Shannon Wright and science teacher John Gillette never got a chance to address members of Congress.

Last spring, they were both shot and killed by middle school students—Wright in a schoolyard in Jonesboro, Arkansas, and Gillette at a graduation dance in Edinboro, Pennsylvania.

Soon after the shootings, the U.S. Senate Democratic Strike Force for Kids convened a panel of experts to seek advice on ways to stem youth violence.

Speaking for Wright and Gillette—and all the educators who survive them—was David Gondak, president of the Pennsylvania State Education Association.

Gondak recommended that every school district devise a comprehensive plan with elements like "a curriculum piece, peer mediation, and a crisis plan for counseling.

"There's no one solution," Gondak said. "District needs vary tremendously, right up to metal detectors."

While only 10 percent of public schools reported *any* instance of serious crime in a 1997 federal study, Gondak said, it's still best to plan for the worst.

Those at the forum discussed the many factors behind juvenile violence and potential solutions to it, including:

- **Partnerships with police**, like one in New Haven, Connecticut, that limited violence to just one serious act among 19,500 kids last year.

"We have six police officers doing housecalls," reported Assistant Police Chief Douglas McDonald, "referring children to tutoring, probation, and other activities, and reporting the results of home visits to teachers."

- **Restriction of child access to guns** through legislation requiring gunlocks and safe storage of weapons.
- **Early intervention in a child's life** to address such needs as health care and a violence-free home. "We've got to look at a child's life as a whole and provide all the building blocks," said Attorney General Janet Reno.
- **More after-school activities and adult mentoring programs** that get kids off the streets.
- **Adding a fourth R—Respect—to the curriculum.** Said Betty Stockton, a psychologist now working with survivors of the Jonesboro shootings: "When students demonstrate little or no ability to get along with each other, social skills must be taught. It's easier to build kids than repair adults."
- **Conflict resolution and peer mediation.** Connecticut teenager Kurt Brothers, whose best friend died in a January stabbing, told the lawmakers, "Kids feel more comfortable talking to other kids about punishment, instead of a school principal. Detention will *not* solve problems."

Sandy Schaeffer

John Beale/Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Two students console each other after the shooting of Pennsylvania teacher John Gillette. Inset, NEA state leader David Gondak addresses a panel of U.S. senators.

For More Information

For assistance on safe school issues, contact NEA staffer Richard Verdugo at 202/822-7453. Send E-mail to RVerdugo@ nea.org.

The Bottom Line

Gun warning: Newly announced federal regulations, based on a directive from President Clinton, require gun dealers to post reminders that federal law prohibits, except under limited circumstances, handgun possession by anyone under 18.

Violence against girls: Most rape victims in the United States, says the National Council for Research on Women, are adolescent girls. The most recent stats note that girls younger than 17 make up 62 percent of the victims in reported rape cases.

Contempt: Animal caretakers in the United States average 78 cents an hour more than the nation's child care workers, says the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The $6.12 average child care worker hourly rate trails the parking lot attendant rate by 26 cents an hour.

Post-Joe Camel America: Cigar smoking among teenagers is up one third since 1991, reports the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. A person who smokes five cigars a day faces the same cancer risk as someone who smokes a daily pack of cigarettes.

On Capitol Hill

Getting the Right IDEA

Too many districts are passing out bad information about IDEA '97. Here's the real scoop.

Educating in an inclusive environment is already difficult enough. Then along comes a federal law that some state officials and school district attorneys contend will make life even *more* complex.

The newly amended Individuals With Disabilities Education Act — IDEA '97—has been blamed for mandating more paperwork, forcing regular ed teachers to attend more meetings, and handcuffing principals when disabled students get violent.

Time out.

"There *is* an upside to the new IDEA," says Jim Woodhead, a special education teacher in Newark, California. "The trouble is folks are still acting on old information. And local special ed directors have developed a siege mentality because of advice from attorneys who foster a cover-your-backside attitude that loses sight of our goal—helping kids learn."

Woodhead, president of the 408-member Newark Teachers Association/CTA, successfully challenged that attitude this spring by pushing his district to discipline a special ed student who threatened teachers' lives.

His tool: IDEA '97 guidelines from the U.S. Department of Education.

Had administrators stuck with the district law firm's advice—allowing suspension of a special ed student *only* for weapon or drug possession—that student would have returned to campus "without negative consequences for his conduct," says Woodhead.

"I took an aggressive stance," he emphasizes, "because teachers sign up to teach school, not to be targets."

Woodhead, who teaches communicatively disabled preschoolers at the June Whiteford School, doesn't think teachers sign up to be bureaucrats, either.

Woodhead sticks to the "short form" when writing individualized education programs (IEPs). "You have to be able to run risks and be creative to build a desire in kids to communicate with you," he argues. "You don't do that by hiding behind your desk with a pile of checklists. You do it by mixing it up with kids."

Jose Villegas

NEA member Jim Woodhead, who teaches disabled preschoolers, says IDEA '97 works—when given a chance.

The people charged with implementing IDEA '97 seem to agree.

District law firms are "calling for a lot of documentation that is not required in this pro-kid, pro-teacher law," says Thomas Hehir, director of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs. "And, generally, we do *not* view the new law as requiring more meetings."

Hehir sets the record straight on these hotly debated issues:

■ **Discipline of students with disabilities.** Under IDEA '97, "if students bring weapons or drugs to school, they can be immediately removed to an interim alternate placement—even if the parents object," Hehir notes.

And if a child is "substantially likely" to injure himself, herself, or others, school personnel may seek an expedited session with a special ed hearing officer to remove the child.

■ **Individualized Education Programs.** IEPs "should be specific about the accommodations and supports needed by disabled children in regular classrooms," Hehir says. "When an IEP team determines up front what support and accommodation children need in their environment, our research shows the placement is far more successful."

If behavioral problems are an issue, Hehir says, "they should be addressed right up front in the student's IEP. Too often, kids don't have a behavioral management program or access to a school psychologist."

The law requires each IEP team to include "at least one regular education teacher if the child already participates in a regular ed program or is expected to participate in one," Hehir says. The goal: "to promote better education for children with disabilities and to help teachers do a better job."

For More Information

For background and updates on IDEA '97, point your Web browser to www.nea.org/idea.

Some Facts on IDEA '97

■ In response to concerns raised by NEA and the Council for Exceptional Children, the U.S. Department of Education last spring rescinded a requirement that all individualized education programs be in conformance with the new law by July 1. **The department intends to place in final regulations the requirement that IEPs developed, reviewed, or revised on *or after* July 1, 1998 meet IDEA '97 requirements.**

■ IDEA '97 actually *reduces* paperwork in three areas:

1. In cases of disability re-evaluation, the law allows a review of existing data. If sufficient data exists to determine that a child continues to have a disability, the local educational authority does not have to conduct another assessment unless one is requested by a parent.

2. The law now permits the use of benchmarks in place of a lengthy list of short-term IEP objectives.

3. Local educational authorities may now use IDEA funds to pay teachers who provide special ed and related services in a regular ed class or other educational setting—even if non-disabled children benefit. In such cases, no time and effort documentation is required.

■ IDEA '97 requires special ed funding to be "placement-neutral," meaning that states can't promote a particular kind of placement. Funding should support the environment most *appropriate* for the child.

■ Under the new law, states are eligible for "state improvement grants"—ranging from $500,000 to $2 million—to train special ed *and* regular ed teachers. The majority of grant dollars must be spent for preservice and in-service training.

■ IDEA '97 requires "appropriate training and supervision" of support staff who work with disabled kids. And the law now clarifies the right of ESP to participate in an IEP team if they have "knowledge or special expertise regarding the child."

■ A current $90 million-a-year program for training special ed and "related services personnel" remains intact.

Access to algebra: The United States is the only nation in the developed world that tracks kids out of advanced math as early as the eighth grade. One result: Only 25 percent of American kids take algebra before ninth grade. Another 15 percent never take algebra at all.

Revolving door at the top: Four out of every 10 school superintendents in districts with at least 3,000 students have been at their jobs less than three years, according to the American Association of School Administrators.

Growing interest in cyberspace: Almost two-thirds of America's teachers now say they use the Internet in their professional work. Of these Internet users, about half—44 percent—say they tap cyberspace for lesson planning.

Mergers: The ranks of the nation's textbook publishers will soon be a little thinner. Addison Wesley Longman has announced plans to buy the second biggest company in the $7 billion educational publishing business, Simon & Schuster.

In the States

And the Band Plays On
"Paycheck protection" legislation has now perished in more than a dozen state legislatures, but don't expect its anti-union, anti-public education advocates to give up anytime soon.

Americans for Tax Reform has pledged to field "paycheck protection" bills or initiatives in every state. And its ally, the American Legislative Exchange Council, has already disseminated a model "paycheck" bill to conservative lawmakers in your state.

In June, a Nevada district court ruled that a "paycheck protection" ballot initiative is unconstitutional and may not appear on the November ballot, but proponents pledge to appeal to the state supreme court.

And don't take your eyes off the U.S. Congress. House members rejected the Paycheck Protection Act in March, but the concept surfaced yet again during debate on campaign finance reform.

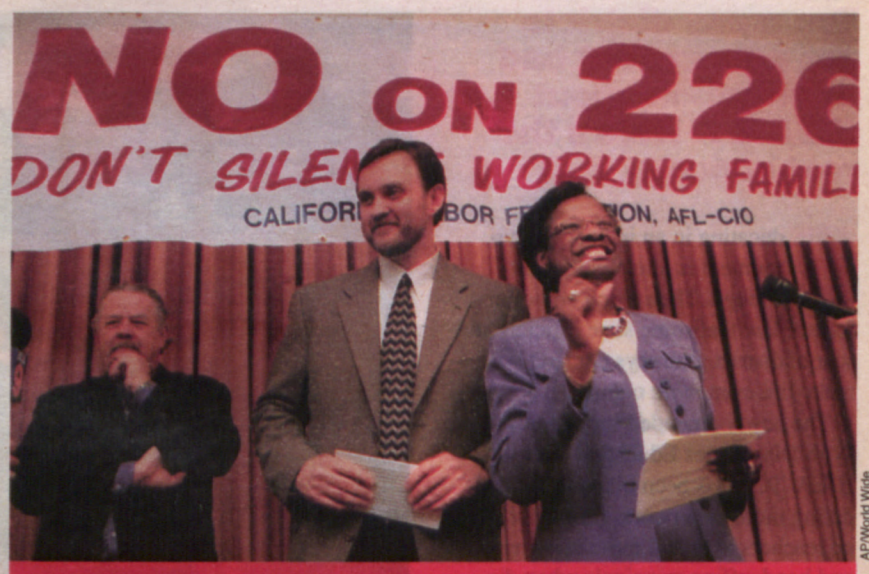
Despite the ongoing need to fight defensive battles, NEA will continue to lobby for *real* finance reform, including full disclosure of all campaign funding sources and partial public financing.

What Makes 'Em So Mad...
Small wonder public education's enemies are trying so hard to muffle the political voice of school employees. Here's a sampling of recent victories won by NEA members:

- In **Utah**, legislators approved $9 million for middle school class size reduction and $3.5 million for teachers to buy school supplies.
- School employees in **Iowa, Maryland,** and **Virginia** won pension improvements. Other gains in Virginia include $100 million for school construction and $3.2 million to implement legislation passed last year allowing teachers to refuse to perform health-related activities.
- The **Tennessee** Education Association defeated bills aimed at limiting teacher insurance benefits, repealing tenure for teachers hired in the future, and pulling principals from teacher bargaining units.

Protection? Rejection!

Score one for NEA members in California. But the fight against "paycheck protection" isn't over.



AP/World Wide

California Teachers Association President Lois Tinson celebrates the defeat of Proposition 226, a proposal that would have silenced effective union political advocacy.

In a huge victory for union members across the nation, Californians voted last June to defeat Proposition 226—a proposal that would have silenced effective union political advocacy in the state.

The ballot initiative would have required unions to get written approval from each member every year to use a portion of their dues to support issues and candidates in the political arena.

No corporations or businesses would have been required to follow these rules.

"Proposition 226 was a transparent attempt to take advocates for public education out of politics," notes NEA President Bob Chase.

Adds California Teachers Association President Lois Tinson: "Voters here saw Prop 226 for what it was—an attempt by proponents of private school tuition vouchers to limit the effectiveness of public education advocates."

Jay Reiter

Debi Rocco, Oregon

Want proof? CTA research shows that the leading contributors to Proposition 226 were among the leading contributors to Proposition 174, the 1993 California ballot initiative that would have established vouchers for private school tuition.

And Association research shows that the network of organizations behind Proposition 226—the National Taxpayers Union, Citizens for a Sound Economy, the Claremont Institute, the Alexis de Tocqueville Institution, and others—is the same network behind similar efforts in 29 other states to limit the political participation of union members.

In California, CTA and the state AFL-CIO worked together to lead a massive mobilization that exposed the special interests bankrolling Prop 226. Voters responded and rejected the pro-position, by a 54-46 percent margin.

The turnaround was stunning. Only a few months earlier, public opinion polls had Prop 226 ahead by a 70-30 percent margin.

With victory in California, the war now shifts to other states. In Oregon, Republican gubernatorial candidate Bill Sizemore wrote a "paycheck protection" initiative that will appear on the ballot in November.

"Sizemore is the same individual," says Roger Gray of the Oregon Education Association, "who in past elections promoted private school tuition vouchers and cuts in public employee retirement benefits."

Sizemore also directs the Oregon Taxpayers United, a group pushing for "controls on the rising cost of public education" through slashes in programs and personnel.

OEA, with NEA help, will fight against the "paycheck protection" measure and also campaign for counter-initiatives it crafted to make the state's political process more democratic.

One of these OEA-backed proposals would increase disclosure requirements for political contributors and ads, regulate paid-petition signature gatherers, and guarantee the right to make political contributions through payroll deduction. Oregon's PTA, League of Women Voters, and Common Cause are backing the OEA initiatives.

OEA's Debi Rocco, a special ed instructional assistant working full-time on this campaign, notes that NEA members in Oregon are "very excited about the opportunity to be part of something positive. They're tired of fighting negative battles."

Californians are, too.

With Proposition 226 behind them, says CTA's Tinson, "teachers here can continue to pursue their number one priority—the improvement of education in California—with the full resources of a politically active organization."

For More Information

NEA's Project on State Association Political Activities maintains a database on "paycheck protection" bills and initiatives. To give or receive information, call 202/822-7811.

The Bottom Line

New schools, old problem: Close to 850 new schools were built last year in the United States. Unfortunately, only slightly over one third of these new facilities feature phone lines that link directly into individual classrooms.

Vouchers: In June, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that Milwaukee can use public tax dollars to finance tuition at private religious schools. NEA is now working to convince the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn the Wisconsin ruling.

For-profit schools: The Edison Project, the private company founded by Channel One entrepreneur Chris Whittle, will be operating almost 50 schools starting this fall, about double last year's total. Enrollment in Edison schools may hit 25,000 this year.

Charters: Some 31 states have now passed legislation authorizing the creation of charter schools—facilities funded by public tax dollars but not run by local school districts. Charter schools are expected to enroll as many as a quarter-million students this fall.

On Your Side

Testiness in the Tarheel State

In North Carolina, NEA members take on a teacher competency test—and pass with flying colors.

To use end-of-grade test results as the *sole* basis for forcing teachers to take a basic competency test is "arbitrary, irrational, punitive, and counterproductive to our efforts to improve the learning environment at low performing-schools."

These stinging words came from Gaston County, North Carolina, superintendent Edward Sadler, in an affidavit directed at state education authorities.

You can just imagine what *teachers* were saying.

This spring, the state tried to get teachers, guidance counselors, librarians, and principals in its 15 "lowest-performing schools" to take portions of a general competency test devised for Florida state college juniors—even though researchers found the test an invalid gauge of teaching expertise or knowledge of subject content.

By singling out these 247 people—out of a North Carolina teaching force of 80,000—the state sparked a near-rebellion among NEA members.

The North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE) pledged to support any educator who boycotted the test, fought in court for a preliminary injunction to stop the exam, and lobbied in the state legislature to change the law that authorized it.

The pressure worked. In June, legislators finally agreed to changes in the Excellent Schools Act—passed in 1997 in an effort to raise teaching salaries and standards.

The outcome: *No* North Carolina teacher will be required to take this meaningless competency test in 1998.

One caveat: In the upcoming school year, the principal or state assistance team assigned to a low-performing school may recommend to the State Board of Education that a certified staff member whose performance "is impaired by a lack of general knowledge" be required to take a general knowledge test.

Helping shift legislative debate toward this compromise was a broad alliance that included NCAE, the Gaston and Edgecombe county school boards, the State Board of Education, and even members of assistance teams working at the 15 targeted schools.

Assistance teams are in a better position to assess teacher performance than any paper-and-pencil test, notes team member Richard Greene—a retired principal—in an affidavit supporting the NCAE lawsuit.

"Assistance team members interact with staff over the course of the school year," Greene explains, "and teachers are provided objective, individualized feedback and instruction."

That kind of feedback has helped teachers at the William R. Davie Middle School in Halifax County boost seventh and eighth graders' math and reading scores—despite student poverty, shortages of everything from copying equipment to computers, and a meager $5,000 budget to meet the professional development needs of a staff of 37.

"Sure, teachers have to be held accountable for student achievement," says NEA member Lutricia Lynch, principal of the Davie school. "But they should be allowed to prove themselves by being observed working with students.

"As long as we're making progress and showing growth," Lynch adds, "that should be taken into consideration by the state."

NCAE President Joyce Elliott agrees. "If handled badly," Elliott says, "teacher competency testing serves only to drive out good teachers who choose to stay at low-performing schools.

"Rather than being scapegoated for problems beyond their control," Elliott adds, "these teachers should be supported in their efforts to overcome obstacles to learning."

The moral of this story: There has to be a better way.

"We have to find ways to hold *everybody* accountable," notes Lynch, one of 10 co-plaintiffs in the Association lawsuit.

"A process should be developed so that everybody in education improves—parents, teachers, students, and lawmakers. Name one profession," Lynch challenges, "that does not start out in education!"

Chris Seward

NEA member Lutricia Lynch says paper-and-pencil tests don't deliver "accountability for student achievement."

For More Information

Send a Fax to William R. Davie Middle School principal Lutricia Lynch at 919/586-7845.

Better Start Cramming. . . Could North Carolina-style teacher competency testing make its way to your state? At least one Tarheel, NEA Executive Committee member Eddie Davis, thinks so.

"North Carolina is a leader in many school reform issues, so our colleagues around the country can expect to see the same thing," warns Davis, a high school English teacher in Durham.

In many places, "public opinion is shaped by anti-public education people who see teachers as scapegoats," Davis points out. "We need to let the public know about our Association-led reform movement."

Davis's advice: Tell folks about how NEA members in many places "help colleagues who may have difficulty delivering instruction to children—through peer assistance, peer review, or other collaborative efforts to ensure teacher quality."

The Contract That Counts In Vermont, an arbitrator has ruled that the Colchester school board violated the union contract when it contracted out custodial services last year and laid off nine Colchester Education Association members. The arbitrator ordered reinstatement and back pay for the nine.

No Drugs in This Deal Her legal costs paid by the Minnesota Education Association, Spanish teacher Teresa Robertz has reached a mediated settlement with a Duluth-area student who planted a bag of marijuana in her desk. The settlement includes "education for and community service by the student in exchange for dismissal of the lawsuit against him."

School Officer Is Robbed In Conroe, Texas, school police Sergeant Mike Thompson somehow was designated "salaried" and denied overtime pay while other sergeants drew time and a half. NEA member Thompson grieved and won $28,540 in back pay.

Advice to the wise: Save copies of those time sheets!

Move over Beethoven: A new law enacted this past spring in Florida requires state-financed child care centers to play classical music to preschoolers. The music, say some researchers, stimulates brain development.

A new career incentive: The state senate president in Massachusetts is proposing a $20,000 "signing bonus" to encourage talented college grads to go into teaching. The state's starting teacher salary currently averages less than $27,000.

White-collar pay: Professionals who belong to unions earn $40 more per week than unrepresented professionals, according to new stats from the U.S. Department of Labor. Unionized technical workers earn $111 per week more than their nonunion counterparts.

Grades and parents: Nearly 90 percent of students who earn *A*s and *B*s say their parents are available to help with homework, according to a new survey of 1,300 secondary students conducted by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

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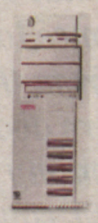

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Jenny Hungerford Fights Drug Abuse Using Her Own Experiences

That's Why She's a Prudential Spirit of Community Award Honoree

"I learned that even I, who had once taken so much from the people I care about and from my community, could be a positive and productive citizen."

Jenny Hungerford
1998 Prudential Spirit of Community Award Honoree

Jenny Hungerford, 18, of Orfordville, Wisconsin, knows the damaging effects of drug abuse. She's turned her own struggle with addiction into a powerful message to help other teens keep away from drugs. That's why she's a 1998 Prudential Spirit of Community Award honoree.

The search for 1999 candidates is now under way. Prudential created the Spirit of Community Awards in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals to honor young people like Jenny for outstanding community service. We're looking for young people in every middle and high school who have taken it upon themselves to help their communities.

Information is on its way. Principals in every middle and high school in America will be receiving information and applications from NASSP in September. Every school can choose an honoree, who then becomes a candidate for statewide honors, a $1,000 prize and a trip to Washington, D.C. In the capital, ten national honorees will each receive a $5,000 award and a gold medallion—plus a trophy for his or her school.

Get involved today! Encourage your volunteer-minded students to apply. The application deadline is October 30, 1998. For more information, call the NASSP at **1-800-253-7746 ext. 324.**

nassp
National Association of Secondary School Principals

Prudential

This program is supported by the American Association of School Administrators, the Council of the Great City Schools, the National Middle School Association, the National School Boards Association, the National School Public Relations Association, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and the National 4-H Council. The Prudential Insurance Company of America, 751 Broad Street, Newark, NJ 07102-3777.

Students like Zach and his classmates face bigger challenges than scaling mountains. "They are discouraged children who believe they are failures—at age nine," says Washington teacher Darrell Urlacher. "They are angry and hurt and don't trust." They also can be violent. To help them regain their footing, Urlacher has introduced "adventure-based counseling." See page 21.

Jeff Green

Innovators

Breaking Up the Gang

Bob Riha, Jr.

Innovator:
Arturo Hernandez

Job:
Counselor, Granada Hills High School, California, and professor of Chicano studies and psychology at East Los Angeles Community College

Bright Idea:
After working with gang members for 20 years as a teacher and counselor, Hernandez knows it takes "a community of adults"—parents, employers, judges, educators, recreational directors, ministers, police officers, and coaches—"to shepherd them into the adult world."

Hernandez cites Guillermo, a chronic truant, as a sad example of what happens when this network is absent. With a vigilant mentor, the boy improved his attendance at junior high. The principal recognized his progress, "giving him a sense of belonging and motivation," says Hernandez. But, in high school, Guillermo lost his support system and began to flounder. Within two months, he was incarcerated.

Stories like this fill *Peace in the Streets: Breaking the Cycle of Gang Violence*, Hernandez's compelling account of his work in South Central Los Angeles and a guide to ending gang violence.

Changing gang members "takes time, patience, support, therapy, mentoring, monitoring, and teaching new skills," he says. "It takes good probation and police officers—and schools with small student-teacher ratios."

Impact:
Among Hernandez's success stories: "Happy," a 15-year-old alcoholic who went on to find steady employment and a dedicated wife—and is now raising "high-achieving children."

For More:
Peace in the Streets (Child Welfare League of America Press, $14.95) is available at bookstores, or call 800/407-6273. E-mail Hernandez at xiomata@hotmail.com.

No Class Commercials

Innovator:
Marianne Manilov

Job:
Co-founder, the Center for Commercial-Free Public Education, Oakland, California

Bright Idea:
In 1990, Manilov approached consumer activist Ralph Nader, asking him to challenge Channel One and the commercial programming it pumps into schools.

Nader's response: "*You* should do something!"

Three years later, Manilov and three colleagues opened the Center for Commercial-Free Public Education to help communities make informed decisions about allowing commercials in school.

Commercialism in the schools plays to a captive audience, Manilov notes. And research shows that most students believe their school is actually backing the products being advertised.

Channel One broadcasts 10 minutes of news with two minutes of commercials to 40 percent of the schools in this nation. At a Washington, D.C. press conference last April, Manilov captured headlines when she detailed the cost this imposes on public schools.

"Twelve daily minutes of one secondary school's time costs almost $158,000 a year," she notes—and that far exceeds the total value of the TV and VCR equipment that Channel One supplies to schools in exchange for the broadcast of its programming.

Jose Villegas

This means that Channel One costs taxpayers $1.8 billion a year in classroom time—$300 million just for its two minutes of commercials, says Manilov.

The only one who profits is Channel One, which gets close to $200,000 for each 30-second commercial it runs.

The Center offers research and training resources on how to recognize commercialism in schools in 41 states and in France, South Africa, Australia, and China.

Impact:
Because of the Center's efforts, national media are paying attention to the issue of commercialism in schools, and Senate hearings on Channel One are being convened.

For More:
Contact Manilov at the Center's headquarters, 800/867-5841 or E-mail: unplug@igc.org. On the Web: www.commercialfree.org.

Teachers Are So Vital

Educators have a fan in Mike Yanney, chairman and chief executive officer of America First Companies and a strong supporter of the Nebraska mentoring program All Our Kids. Below is an excerpt of a speech given this year at Nebraska Teacher Appreciation Day.

"The future of our democracy is directly related to how well our youth are being educated. You and I know that at least 30 to 40 percent of them are not getting much of an education at all.

Many citizens blame our educational system, which means they are directly critical of our teachers and administrators. Our local political leaders prefer to turn their heads and hope the problem will go away. . . .

By the time 30 to 40 percent of our youth become teenagers, they have had little or no cultural education, practically no religious education, and their home lives are one step away from shambles.

Then, ladies and gentlemen, our citizens expect you to teach these youths to be good, law-abiding citizens, to be National Honor Society students, and to ultimately be employable. Isn't that ridiculous thinking?

This nation—our citizens—must understand that the problem is not predominantly in our public schools. It is primarily in the devastation of 30 to 40 percent of our family units—a devastation that has no race or economic barriers.

I am optimistic that there are viable solutions.

First, we must make the fathers of these children accept their responsibility, for financial assistance, education, and discipline.

Second, [we need] more mentors and much more money for scholarships.

Third, our churches must pick up a larger load. These youth need and want God in their lives.

You teachers are so vital to the solution. While we are going to move vigorously to solve the problem, the burden of holding this segment of our population from exploding, by necessity, has to be in your hands. Yours is the one facet that is performing with excellence."

Teaching Takes Time

Innovator:
Kenneth G. Wilson

Job:
Co-director of Learning By Redesign, board member of NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE), Nobel laureate, and professor of physics at Ohio State University

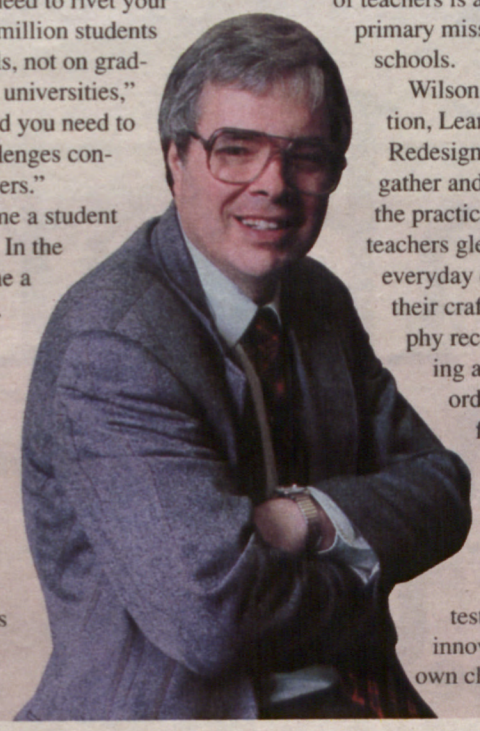
Bright Idea:
What prompts a Nobel laureate to subordinate his interest in elementary particle theory to the study of K-12 education?

"If your aim is to have an impact on science literacy—in fact, on literacy in all its forms—you need to rivet your attention on the 46 million students in our public schools, not on graduate students in our universities," Wilson replies. "And you need to understand the challenges confronting K-12 teachers."

Wilson has become a student of these challenges. In the process, he's become a bit of a provocateur.

"My view," says Wilson, "is that in light of the extraordinary demands we make on teachers today, the timeline for teacher preparation ought to be 10 to 20 years."

Realizing that this borders on science fiction, Wilson also proposes a reshuffling of priorities to ensure that the continuing education of teachers is among the primary missions of K-12 schools.



Wilson's organization, Learning By Redesign, hopes to gather and disseminate the practical knowledge teachers glean from the everyday exercise of their craft. Its philosophy recognizes teaching as a higher-order skill that flourishes only when teachers have the time to "fashion, implement, test, and refine innovation in their own classrooms."

Wilson takes special pride in NFIE's programs "because they promote professional development that's rooted in the ideal of teachers sharing knowledge with teachers."

Says Wilson: "Every single day on the job should be a day of learning for teachers."

Impact:
Learning By Redesign is still in its infancy. But Wilson notes that success in the end depends on reducing "the outrageous demands on teachers' time. Teachers must have time to capitalize on each other's creative imaginations and practical wisdom, replacing weaker approaches with more effective ones learned from choice colleagues."

For More:
Visit the Learning by Redesign Web site at www.physics.ohio-state.edu/~redesign/home.html.

Multiculturalism's Five Dimensions

James Banks, director of the Center for Multicultural Education at the University of Washington, spoke recently with NEA Today*'s Michelle Tucker about the concept he's developed called "the five dimensions of multicultural education."*

How did you develop the concept of the "five dimensions of multicultural education"?
I once gave a talk on multiculturalism at a school. When I was done, a math teacher said to me, "What you said is fine for social science, but it has nothing to do with me."

Ellen Banner

My first reaction was anger and frustration. But then I thought my role as a scholar is to get beyond that and realize that maybe other teachers think that also.

So I developed the "five dimensions of multicultural education" to help educators see that content integration—say, putting content on Mexican Americans or African Americans in the curriculum—is important, but it's only the first dimension.

What's the next dimension?
The knowledge construction process—which asks teachers to help students investigate the implicit cultural assumptions and frames of reference of the discipline they're teaching.

What are the values that underlie knowledge? How do historians or scientists construct knowledge?

Look at the values and assumptions that underlie words like "westward movement," for example. It wasn't west for the Lakota Sioux—or the Mexicans, or the Japanese. It was west for one group, Anglo Americans heading toward the Pacific.

What's "equity pedagogy"?
Equity pedagogy, the third dimension, simply means that teachers change their methods to enable kids from diverse racial groups and both genders to achieve—the physics teacher changing the way she teaches physics, for example, so that girls and African Americans can learn physics.

Does classifying students by learning styles risk stereotyping them?
I'm not really talking about learning styles. I'm talking about teachers modifying their teaching styles so that they use a wide range of strategies and teaching techniques such as cooperative groups, simulations, role-playing, and discovery. In the end, this will help white children, too, since they often do not learn from a highly individualistic, competitive teaching strategy either.

What are the final two dimensions?
The fourth, prejudice reduction, involves methods teachers use to help kids develop positive racial attitudes.

The last, creating an empowering school culture and social structure, means looking not just at individual classrooms, but at the total school structure to see how to make it more equitable.

For example, look at grouping and labeling practices, disproportionality in achievement, who participates in sports, and what the staff looks like racially. Who are the leaders? Are they diverse?

How can any educator be most effective with students of color? How can educators best teach students, respecting their culture while building a nation? Banks discusses these issues and more on the Web at www.nea.org/neatoday and in his book Educating Citizens in a Multicultural Society *(Teachers College Press, $22.95).*

Recommended Reading

James Banks recommends the following books to educators interested in broadening their knowledge of other cultures:

■ *Race and History: Selected Essays 1938-1988* by John Hope Franklin, a collection of 27 pieces, offers the personal perspectives of a scholar looking optimistically at the connection between race and history. Louisiana State University Press, $16.95 (paper).

■ *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* by Gloria Ladson-Billings discusses culturally relevant education from the perspective of a scholar, teacher, parent, and community member. Jossey-Bass, $17 (paper).

■ *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America* by Ronald Takaki presents a cultural history of the American multicultural experience, from colonization to the 1992 Los Angeles riots, and discusses racial and ethnic minorities in relationship to the establishment and to each other. Little, Brown, $14.95 (paper).

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***Money* magazine, June 1998

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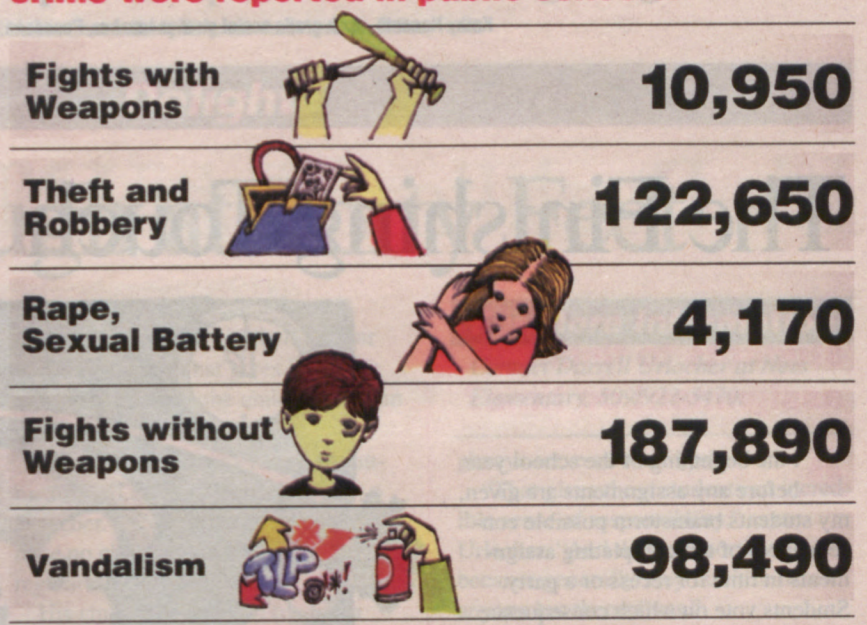
Inside Scoop

What Can We Do about School Violence?

In Indianapolis, students are now subject to random searches with hand-held metal detectors—in elementary school. In Anne Arundel County, Maryland, bomb sniffing dogs have worked full schedules thanks to more than 100 bomb threats during the past year.

Schools nationwide are facing a wider array of threats and violence each year. Here's what safety experts suggest you can do in response.

During 1996-97, more than 400,000 incidents of crime were reported in public schools:



Source: U.S. Department of Education

Look for signs that students are about to "go off."

"Kids give off cues," says Alan McEvoy, a Wittenberg University professor working with the Safe Schools Coalition. "Look for social isolates, youngsters who are fascinated with weaponry, seem to have a vendetta against school or their peers, are part of a negative clique structure, or have suffered a recent humiliation."

An Ohio Gun Safety Institute study shows that students with an aggressive response to shame are most likely to carry weapons to school.

Many safety advocates are now calling for school staffs that include more counselors and full-time school nurses who are professionally trained to notice a child who needs help.

Teach students the difference between tattling and telling.

Children "tattle" to get their own way or to get someone else in trouble, explains McEvoy. Children should be encouraged to "tell" an adult to keep themselves or someone else from getting hurt.

Some schools have started anonymous hotlines where parents or children can provide information that could alert authorities to potential problems.

Know how to intervene effectively to end a fight.

"Order the crowd to disperse immediately," says Jesus Villahermosa, a veteran deputy sheriff whose private company offers safety training for Washington Education Association members. "Get rid of the fuel to the fire." Walk briskly—don't run—to scene of the incident he adds. Approach from the side, with your own hands in front of you. Call out to the students by name or as "ladies" and "gentlemen." Call loudly, and don't use derogatory language.

Fewer fights would start in the first place if students were consistently disciplined not only for fighting but also for failing to disperse. Positive encouragement helps, too—some schools even post the number of "fight-free days" the way factories post "accident-free days," with incentives when a certain number is reached.

Run your school through a "safety audit."

Are there woods on the edges of the campus where intruders could hide? What about a fence? Are there multiple unguarded entrances? Is the main entrance obscured from view of the main office? If you have a circular school, is there supervision in the curves of the hallways? Are janitor closets and storage rooms kept locked? Do computers in the classroom block the teacher's view of what might be happening in the corner?

These are the questions Bob Watson would ask if he were conducting a safety audit of your school. Watson, a former teacher, principal, and FBI agent, was superintendent in 1988 when an armed man killed two students and injured others in a Greenwood, South Carolina school. Now he is a consultant helping schools develop safety and crisis plans.

Develop a communication plan to protect yourself, your classroom, and your school.

"What I hear most often is, 'I'm isolated in this wing,'" says Watson.

Educators in the classroom need an intercom, walkie-talkie, or other means of contacting the central office.

They also need an emergency communication system.

Phyllis Deal, a paraprofessional at J.W. Riley Elementary in Milwaukee, explains her school's system. If classrooms hear a p.a. announcement that "art, music, and phys ed are cancelled," everyone goes to the nearest classroom, where the door is locked until an "all clear" is given.

Villahermosa prefers a very straightforward announcement like, "We have an intruder in the building. Go into lockdown mode." That way substitutes or other legitimate outsiders in the building will get the message.

Villahermosa reserves codes for hand signs among staff. If you run into a stranger in the hall and need help, show two fingers to another staff member, signalling "don't leave me." A closed fist means the stranger has a weapon. Three fingers means "it's time to break this off and get help."

Teachers can carry yellow and red cards to the playground. If there's a problem, send a child with the yellow card to the office. The red card signals an emergency.

Look at new resources for defusing student violence.

Several states have established university-affiliated centers for school safety as clearinghouses.

The Center for the Prevention of School Violence at North Carolina State University provides information on programs like School Resource Officers. This program has uniformed, armed officers in 78 percent of North Carolina high schools and 48 percent of the middle schools.

Students Against Violence Everywhere, another North Carolina State program, uses peer pressure to promote fight-free days and other appropriate student behavior.

In the end, be prepared—and realistic.

No amount of innovative ideas and safety plans can prevent every tragedy. "All the safety procedures were followed in Jonesboro," says Pennsylvania State Education Association President David Gondak. "These incidents heighten our awareness that we are all subject to violent acts."

But, as one administrator said after experiencing a school shooting, we should all become a "little less cavalier about our own safety."

The public seems to agree, and communities are backing strict measures to ensure safer schools.

Bernice Chorba, a secretary at Pershing Hill Elementary in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, says students found guilty of bomb threats are expelled and fined. One middle school student was fined $2,000 and sentenced to 2,000 hours of community service for an unfounded threat.

In Indianapolis, there was no public outcry when the metal detectors were introduced. Three boys have been expelled for concealed weapons.

For More Information

- See pages 8 and 26 for resources from NEA.
- Center for the Prevention of School Violence, 20 Enterprise St., Suite 2, Raleigh, NC 27607-7375, 800/299-6054. On the Web at www.ncsu.edu/cpsv/.
- Watson Consulting, Inc., P.O. Box 2434, Greenwood, SC 29622. Call 864/260-9649 or E-mail bob@watsonconsultinginc.com.
- Jesus Villahermosa, Personal Awareness and Protection Training, Inc., Box 644381, University Place, WA 98464. Call 253/858-9146.
- The Pennsylvania State Education Association distributes an "assault card" with its annual calendar, listing precise procedures for members to follow if assaulted. Contact PSEA, 400 N. Third St., Box 1724, Harrisburg, PA 17105, 717/255-7000.

Students &

Good Stuff

Safe Schools
An Educator's Legal Guide to Stress-Free Discipline and School Safety provides brief, practical summaries of the legal information that educators need to know to deal confidently with difficult discipline situations. Topics include assaults and threats, sexual harassment, censorship, dealing with student confidences, and discipline of special education students. 311 pp., $59 from National Educational Service, 1252 Loesch Rd., Bloomington, IN 47404, 888/763-9045. For more information, visit the Web at **www.nes.org** or send E-mail to nes@nes.org.

Race and Restructuring
In *Race, Class, and Power in School Restructuring*, Pauline Lipman examines how school reform targeted to help low-achieving African American students must take into account political and ideological contexts. She tells the story of school restructuring at two junior high schools—and how educators' ideologies, race, and class shaped the outcomes. 334 pp., $19.95 from State University of New York Press, 800/666-2211 or on the Web at www.sunypress.edu.

For Every Child
Making Schools Work for Every Child, a great new Web site at **equity.enc.org**, provides math and science materials for educators working to create equitable classroom conditions that allow every child to succeed. Activities, journal articles, and essays help educators identify inequities and gain insights into their students' diverse strengths. This site, maintained by the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse for Mathematics and Science Education, also offers information on forming local learning communities to determine how best to serve a diverse student population.

Young Leaders
Youth Leadership: A Guide to Understanding Leadership Development in Adolescents examines the three major stages of adolescent leadership development: awareness, interaction, and mastery. Authors Josephine Van Linden and Carl Fertman also explain how all adolescents possess leadership potential that can be nurtured. 288 pp., $25 from Jossey-Bass. In local bookstores or call 800/956-7339.

You know you have a problem when . . .

"All the emphasis is placed on test scores, not on actual student accomplishments."

Kathy Naeseth, sixth grade social studies teacher, Pasadena, Maryland

Dilemma

The Finishing Touch

How do you motivate students to finish an assignment on time?

At the beginning of the school year, before any assignments are given, my students brainstorm possible consequences of not completing assignments in time for recess or a party. Students vote on which consequence will be enforced during the year—for example, finishing the assignment while they eat lunch in the classroom, during study time later in the day, or after school.

Lisa Hunt
Elementary counselor
Litchfield, Illinois

To motivate students, make sure that all assignments are meaningful, important, and tie into course objectives. No one is motivated to do meaningless stuff. Also:

- Build each assignment based on learning from the prior assignment.
- Don't accept late work. We've been such terrific enablers that kids have learned you'll accept almost anything, anytime. Why bother finishing when you'll give them another chance?
- Remember that no matter what you do, you'll never get 100 percent participation 100 percent of the time. Do the best you can. Remember that students have the right to choose not to do something and accept the consequences of their actions.

Adrienne Mack
High school English and journalism teacher
Los Angeles, California

My colleagues and I have found a system that works well for important assignments that are to be completed at home.

When we announce the assignment, each child gets a detailed direction packet that includes a clear rubric, copies of any necessary templates, examples, and a suggested time line.

Ted Pitts

We also include, in bold letters, the due date.

On the bottom of the front page is a clip-off contract to be signed by the parents and students, indicating that they're aware of the deadlines and have received the information packet.

Newsletters include reminders about the project's due date and offer to provide any help. We also ask our students on a regular basis about their progress on the project—a reminder that the due date is coming up.

Mary E. Murphy
Third grade teacher
Anchorage, Alaska

In the lower grades, children have a tendency to think they have more time than they actually have to complete an assignment. I let them know how much should be accomplished at the halfway point—for example, after 10 minutes, I announce that their math assignment should be at least half done. Often I see kids scrambling back to work. Then I give a "two-minute warning."

Marilyn Tomaszewski
Second grade teacher
Garden City, Michigan

I teach sixth grade children with emotional disabilities and varying learning abilities.

With slower students or those who do not believe in homework or completing work, I make a secret deal. Each time they finish an assignment on time, I give them a signed slip of paper that can be used for a point on any assignment they choose. A maximum of five points can be added to any assignment.

It's the students' responsibility to hold on to these slips and turn them in after they receive a grade. You wouldn't believe what my students would do for an extra five points!

Linda Moccio
Sixth grade teacher
Midlothian, Virginia

Got an Answer?

How do you stretch your budget dollars at school?
Send your answer to *NEA Today* through regular mail, Fax 202/822-7206, or E-mail at **dilemma2@neatoday.nea.org**.

Respondents published here will receive a bright *NEA Today* mug!

Strategies

You know you've been successful when . . .

"Students ask to be in your classroom, even though you have a reputation for being tough."

Mildred Dickerson, seventh/eighth grade math teacher, Dallas, Texas

Delight

Breakthrough at Forty Feet

Troubled students reach new heights when challenged to trust and succeed.

Darrell Urlacher's rosy-cheeked elementary students are learning something as they scale a rock face—but these aren't Boy Scouts on a camping trip.

In fact, they're disruptive, even dangerous young people who are part of Urlacher's HOPE (Healthy Opportunities for Promoting Excellence) program at Ness Elementary in Spokane, Washington.

And out there on that rock, they're participating in "adventure-based counseling," which thrusts physical challenges at troubled students in an attempt to break through to them.

"These are kids who can't be in a regular classroom," explains Urlacher. "They are threat to themselves or others, they are seriously disruptive, or they have a history of sexual acting out.

"They are discouraged children who believe they are failures—at age nine," says Urlacher. "They are angry and hurt and don't trust."

For the past four years, students like these have been voluntarily taken from their regular classes and placed in Urlacher's HOPE program.

When placed in a physically challenging environment, emotions and behaviors that these students had been able to mask—sometimes—in their regular classes emerge. That gives Urlacher the chance to help the children take on their problems.

"They learn to cooperate, communicate, and achieve a goal," says Urlacher. "Without these skills, they have no chance of succeeding in a regular classroom."

His students also learn trust—in themselves, in each other, and in their teacher—through trust-building classroom activities. Students spot each other and fall into each others arms. They lead each other across a fake mine field blindfolded. They play games that require cooperation in order to succeed.

During rock climbing expeditions, students must learn to trust that Urlacher and his assistants will hold fast to their ropes as they dangle 40 feet above ground. Then each student gets to hold the rope while another works up the rock face (though adults always serve as back-ups).

"That gives these students an incredible sense of responsibility," says Urlacher. "And that's important, because generally they don't think of anyone but themselves."

Students don't get a free ride on their studies while in the HOPE program. Urlacher works with two assistants for a class of 12, a student/staff ratio that allows them to devote two afternoons a week to adventure activities and still keep students academically on par.

Students usually remain with Urlacher about six months, then return to their regular classrooms—where teachers typically note a positive change in behavior, academic skills, and decision-making abilities.

Adventure-based counseling is used more often with drug-dependent and high school students. But "each year a child goes through life with anger control issues, it becomes much harder to turn them around," says Urlacher. "Early intervention is key."

These students "are not slow learners," Urlacher adds, "so when they can deal with these problems, the learning falls into place."

For More Information

Contact Darrell Urlacher at Ness Elementary, 509/922-5470.

Jeff Green

Having to scale a 40-foot rock face—and trust your teacher to hold fast to the rope—captures the attention of NEA member Darrell Urlacher's bright but troubled students as they await their turn to climb.

Idea Exchange

As a New Year Begins

On the first day of middle school, I have my students write a paragraph or so on what their anxieties are (lockers, changing classes, gym uniforms) and what they are excited about.

On the last day of school, I get those papers out. Kids love to see how far they've come. Then they write a letter to next year's class explaining how they overcame those fears.

On the first day of the next year, I give the new students both letters so they can have some quick reassurance that, yes, they will survive seventh grade.

Kathleen Dick
Shawnee Mission, Kansas

Remembering the names and faces of 120 new students every fall tends to be difficult for me, so I came up with a simple and cheap aid that helps me at the beginning of the year—and helps substitute teachers all year long.

At the start of the school year, I make copies of all my seventh graders' pictures from last year's yearbook. I cut out the pictures and glue them on my seating chart next to each student's name. I keep the seating chart with me for the first few days of class, and I take it home with me, so I can study the faces with the names.

Darla Meier
Rocky Ford, Colorado

Works4Me
nea's e-mail classroom tip of the week!

Have a great idea? Pass along your tips to *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, Fax 202/822-7206, or E-mail: ideas@neatoday.nea.org.

For more tips, check out NEA's weekly E-mail service, Works4Me. To sign up, send an E-mail to lyris@list.nea.org.

- In the "subject" line, type: sign me up, NEA!
- In the message block, type: subscribe Works4Me
- Send the message.

To submit your own tip, E-mail it to: owner-Works4Me @list.nea.org.

Families &

Good Stuff

Lights, Safety, Action!
Youth Safety Congress '98 offers students ages 9-19—and adult leaders—safety and health education sessions that focus on agricultural, vocational, environmental, and personal issues affecting youth. For details on the October 24-27 meeting in Hollywood, California, contact the National Safety Council, 1121 Spring Lake Dr., Itasca, IL 60143, 800/621-7615. Visit the Web at www.nsc.org/mem/youth.htm or E-mail: youthsafety.nsc.org.

Getting Parents Involved
Hand in Hand: Parents, Schools, Communities United for Kids, on the Web at www.handinhand.org, provides information on special events like "Take Our Parents to School Week" and "Parents Technology Night," plus a newsletter, an educational conference calendar, and tips on getting parents involved. Developed by the Mattel Foundation and the Institute for Educational Leadership, this resource is available in English and Spanish.

Facts on File: Gangs
Gangs: A Handbook for Community Awareness by Rick Landre, Mike Miller, and Dee Porter (a police officer, counselor, and teacher, respectively) provides an in-depth look at gang types, behaviors, and activities—plus real stories from gang members themselves. The authors, acknowledging that jail isn't a long-term solution for troubled youths, include comprehensive listings of community-based anti-gang resources and a bibliography. $12.95 from Facts on File, Inc., 800/322-8755.

The Real Buzz
Buzzed: The Straight Facts About the Most Used and Abused Drugs From Alcohol to Ecstasy has a simple message—"Just say know." Written by three Duke University Medical Center professors, *Buzzed* offers straightforward scientific evidence on the physiological effects of drug use. A chapter is devoted to each of 12 different categories of drugs—from hallucinogens to alcohol. The book, recently adopted by the Orange County (California) Sheriff's Department for training mentors, includes a quiz to test the reader's drug knowledge and a glossary of drug-related street slang. $14.95 from W.W. Norton.

You know you have a problem when . . .
"You have parent night or school visits—and no one comes."
Jane Goodman, eighth grade Earth science teacher, Midland, Texas

Dilemma

It's Back-to-School Night . . .

How do you get reluctant parents to participate?

Our school has noticed an increase in parent participation in back-to-school night ever since we started doing evening programs.

The students from each class perform in front of their parents in the multipurpose room. Presentations range from poetry and music to medleys and dances.

Everyone gets excited about this annual program. Students have the opportunity to shine onstage, and parents are anxious to come and see their child perform. Video cameras are everywhere.

Leticia Silva
Fourth grade teacher
Yuba City, California

We give 10 incentive points to each student whose parent attends any PTSA meeting or parent night, which includes Freshman Orientation Night and the two times a year that parents are invited to pick up their children's report cards.

We've seen a dramatic increase in parental attendance since instituting this reward. And these incentive points can really help a student teetering between grades.

Marsha Franklin
High school English and French teacher
Maysville, Kentucky

Turn the occasion into a treasure hunt. Send personal invitations at least a week ahead of time—and make sure parents understand that children are welcome.

Make a list of areas that you hope parents will visit—the PTA or PTO sign-up table, the school office, the library, the supply store. Attach this list to a map of the school and pass out copies to parents as they arrive.

As parents visit the areas, hand out pertinent information and have them check off their list.

Of course, the "X" on the treasure map should be your classroom, where parents and children will find a "treasure" of refreshments waiting!

In your classroom, the hunt could continue by having parents locate their child's desk, read the classroom rules, visit the science center, and sign up to help with a class party. Put the sign-up list at the back of the classroom, next to the refreshments you're serving.

Leah Keith
First grade teacher
Montgomery, Alabama

During the school year, when a teacher or grade level wants to make a more formal presentation that does not include children, our parent group has been very generous in providing child care at the school. Our parents are appreciative, and we're able to have presentations where large numbers of parents attend.

Suzanne Moore
Second/third grade teacher
Milwaukie, Oregon

Our elementary school was "reconstituted," and all staff—from the principal to the lunchroom manager—were newly assigned to the building. Meeting as many parents and community members as soon as possible was very important.

We presented a school T-shirt to each student who brought a parent to our first open house. Attendance was nearly 100 percent.

Cay Spitzer
Third grade teacher
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Last year, our seventh grade team had a great showing of parents for back-to-school night. Some reasons:

- Students created and displayed brochures of themselves. They really wanted to show themselves off.
- Each teacher adviser made phone calls inviting parents personally.
- We provided delicious snacks that we were sure to tell students about.

This year, we plan to initiate student-led conferences.

Judi Ferreira
Seventh grade teacher
New London, New Hampshire

Got an Answer?

How do you deal with parents who insist on a specific teaching strategy or method?
Send your answer by regular mail, Fax 202/822-7206, or E-mail at dilemma2@neatoday.nea.org. Include your name, educational position, and phone numbers.

Published respondents will receive a bright new *NEA Today* mug!

Communities

You know you've been successful when . . .

"Children stop you on the street—just to talk and let you know what they're doing."

Rosemarie Evans, elementary classroom assistant, Latrobe, Pennsylvania

Delight

Good 'FIT' With Families

Educators find a new way to put out the welcome mat for New Jersey parents.

Coming up with new ways to get parents involved in schools can be a bit like "reinventing the wheel," acknowledges NEA member Renee Carfagno.

Luckily, she and her colleagues at the Marcella L. Duffy School (K-5) in Florence Township, New Jersey are zooming along on a new set of treads.

They've embraced Family Involvement Training (FIT), a flexible, user-friendly program that comes in a "kit" from the New Jersey Education Association.

The kit contains a host of useful resources on how to conduct one- to three-hour workshops for parents on topics such as homework, self-esteem, and bridging the cultural gap.

Planning forms, scripts, and overheads for the presenters and handouts for the parents round out the package.

"The kit is all-inclusive, everything from invitations to thank you letters," says Carfagno, a school counselor. "It's made everything really manageable."

Students had to be enticed with rewards to bring their parents to the first Duffy School conference last November. About 70 parents attended a 40-minute session on parent-teacher conferences, while the children were entertained by a magician clown.

Educators prepared themselves with the New Jersey Education Association kit, and parents responded. Attendance at the two subsequent parent workshops increased by about a third.

And parents are doing more than getting important information through the workshop.

"They're becoming involved with the heart of the school through the PTA," says Carfagno. "This program has helped us recruit parents to serve as fundraisers, work in the school store, and be 'homeroom moms'—and dads, too."

Parents now feel more comfortable coming into school and asking questions, says Vicki Duff, a third grade teacher and professional development chair of the Toms River Education Association. "There's less resistance between parents and teachers."

Members receive training on how to implement the program, and some go on to train other staff. Not everyone has to run a workshop—some school staff volunteer to supervise the children while parents attend workshops.

In response to the school board's request for more community outreach, TREA presented its work with the FIT program. "The board was thrilled with what we could do," Duff reports.

For More Information

Contact Nancy Volpe at the New Jersey Education Association, 609/599-4561, ext. 2320.

The administration and the school board remain supportive—and receptive to educators' ideas. To date, 16 schools in Duff's 17,000-student district are involved in FIT.

"When the children see teachers, principals, administrators, staff, and their parents working as a team for them, it really boosts their self-esteem," says Florence Township's Carfagno. "The kids just beam when they see their parents come through the school door."

Rachelle Omerson

New Jersey counselor Renee Carfagno (center) enjoys a growing relationship with parents, thanks to a new program that helps educators work with the community.

Idea Exchange

Good News for Parents

We give thank you notes to students for positive things such as working independently, helping others, being honest—whatever it is that we want to reinforce.

On the back of the note, the kids write what they did to earn the thank you. When they have five notes, they turn them in.

Then comes the good part: We call home with a "good news" phone call explaining what the child has done. The kids love it, and the parents are happy to hear about things other than trouble.

Sandy Layman and Greg Ulrich
Moundsville, Minnesota

'The Call'

I call the parents of students who obtain 91 percent or above on unit tests. I call on Sunday afternoon, and the students usually know that I'll be calling. The parent's guarded voice changes when I explain how well the student is doing.

The students tell me this call has been responsible for getting them out of being grounded, taken out to dinner, permission to use the family car, and a lot more warm fuzzies.

This experience helps students improve their work, as they try very hard to get "the call."

Patricia Smith
Hastings, Michigan

Works4Me
nea's e-mail classroom tip of the week!

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For more tips, check out NEA's weekly E-mail service, Works4Me. To sign up, send an E-mail to lyris@list.nea.org.

- In the "subject" line, type: sign me up, NEA!
- In the message block, type: subscribe Works4Me
- Send the message.

To submit your own tip, E-mail it to: owner-Works4Me @list.nea.org.

Bits & Bytes

Bytes for Beginners

I want to purchase a digital camera for my school. Have any shopping tips for me?

First off, forget the film—digital cameras don't use it. Instead, they capture images electronically. You download your photo files from the camera to your computer, where you can manipulate them, drop them into desktop publishing programs, or upload them to a Web site.

Digital camera features are changing so fast it's difficult—if not impossible—to make a perfect buying decision. You'll no doubt find that Farace's laws of computing apply: "The camera you bought six months ago was just replaced with a new model that has better resolution, more features, and lower cost!"

■ **Good buys:** Don't despair—there are some safe bets out there.

Assuming that you're not interested in the high, high end—where the price tag starts at about $4,000—you should check out the Olympus D-340L or the new D-600L. These cameras, which cost $700 to $1,000, get top marks in computer magazines. Picture quality is high and surpasses requirements for publishing images on the Web.

For under $500, you can find a variety of models available from manufacturers like Epson and Kodak. Epson's PhotoPC 550 is a good buy for about $300.

■ **Bells and whistles:** If you'll be shooting mostly in low light, look for a model with a flash.

Buying a digital camera is only half the equation—you also should consider getting a Zip drive to store your photos. Even with the ability to capture images at low resolution, file size is typically half a megabyte per image—a real space eater on your computer's hard drive. Expect to spend up to $150 for a Zip drive and another $150 for Zip disks.

For more tips, check out *Buyer's Guide to Digital Cameras* on the Web at www.hyperzine.com/scripts/hzget.cgi?1301.

Have ideas, comments, or questions about technology? You can E-mail webeditor@dear.nea.org or write to Dear Webeditor, NEA Center for Education Technology, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Check out www.nea.org/cet for more questions from beginners and answers from the experts.

My favorite Web site...

Creative Quotations (**www.bemorecreative.com/home-cq.htm**) features quizzes where kids can guess who said a variety of famous quotes. This makes a nice reading and reflecting activity.

Kim Mitchell, high school language arts/English teacher, Rochester, Michigan

Wired Classroom

Enlivening That First Day

I teach a unified arts course to different sections of students as their schedules change during the school year. To enliven that first day of class when I have to present what might be some "deadly" housekeeping and introductory information, I use presentation software like PowerPoint and hardware that allows me to connect one computer to a large-screen TV.

With PowerPoint, I create a slide presentation that includes a description of the course, the expectations that I have for students, school and classroom rules, and any other information that a teacher would typically present on the first day of class.

PowerPoint allows me to pick various backgrounds and fonts, animate the slides, add graphics, and even throw in sound effects. I can also easily produce a student handout from the slides.

Using my computer's mouse, I am able to control the slides, deliver a running commentary while the slides are displayed on the TV screen, answer any questions—and start each class term with an informative and exciting lesson.

Jon-Paul Roden
Computer science department chair
Vernon, Connecticut

E-Mail Exchange

To build global understanding and improve writing skills, my high schoolers exchange E-mail with peers in other countries.

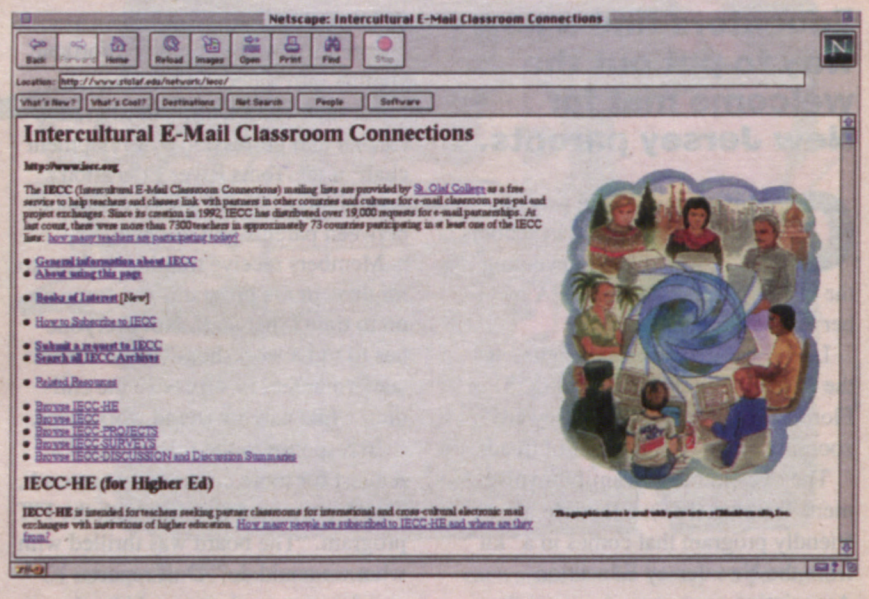
We begin by identifying a partner classroom and matching each of our students with a student in the other class. In weekly E-mails, students discuss stereotypes about life in each others' countries—and the reality that contradicts those stereotypes. They choose three aspects of teen life—such as dating, school, work, the environment, and drugs—and write a shared paper about the similarities and differences between their countries, to be submitted to both teachers for credit.

My students markedly improve their use of standard English, because they know that their E-mail partners—who aren't native English speakers—will not be able to understand incorrect English. For many of my students, this is the first time they've seen a valid reason to use proper English.

Each semester, we inevitably have misunderstandings caused by different cultural contexts. We learn about the effects of an unintended insult—and about the difficulties of keeping peace in a diverse world.

For step-by-step procedures and student handouts, go to www.messalonskee.sad47.k12.me.us/lessplan.htm. Intercultural E-mail Classroom Connections—at www.stolaf.edu/network/iecc/—will help you find a partner classroom.

Stan Davis
High school technology teacher
Oakland, Maine



Surfing ABCs

I taught an introduction to the Internet to kindergarten through third grade children over the summer. By using poster board, magazines, and yarn, I turned my classroom into a hands-on example of a computer, file server, intranet, and the Internet.

This lesson plan has been used to teach high school students—and even other educators—what the Internet is and how information is shared globally. For more on this lesson, go to www.siec.k12.in.us/~west/slides/abc.

Tammy Payton
First grade teacher and Web editor
Loogootee, Indiana

Beta Testing Games

My tenth graders hooked up, via the Web, with Arizona State professor Stephen Hustedde to help test his educational game programs, such as The Wheel, Crossword Creator, Quiz Show, and Educational Squares.

These are gems every classroom should have. Teachers can even inject their own content into the programs.

Testing Crossword Creator gave students a great way to review vocabulary terms. I created questions for Quiz Show, and students tested their knowledge of class material while testing the program.

For more on these games, go to www.tricalico.com.

Bill Burton
High school history teacher
Calhoun, Georgia

Want a weekly tip on using technology? Subscribe to the Wired Classroom E-mail list. Just send an E-mail to ***join-etoolsweekly@list.nea.org*** *(no subject or message needed).*

My favorite CD-ROM...

The Salmon Odyssey (**Ingenuity Works, 800/665-0667, $79.95**) lets kids be the salmon, choose a spawning site, navigate obstacles upstream, try to survive, then finally make their way back to the ocean.

Lillie Minsart, third grade technology mentor, Redding, California

Friendly User

Staying Safe in Cyberspace

This Internet class teaches teens to think before they click.

Who:
Cheryl Harrigan, computer teacher, Hanford High School, Hanford, California

E-mail:
charriga@kings.k12.ca.us

Inspiration:
Put 30 teenagers in front of 30 computers, give them a self-directed curriculum with free time for surfing the Net and sending E-mail—and try not to worry that they'll stray off task and get into inappropriate Web sites.

Sound like a challenge? That's why Harrigan designed her course to cover not only technical skills, but also how to use the Net safely and responsibly.

"Learning to build Web pages is okay, but it's not enough," she explains. "Kids also need to know what's okay and not okay to do."

Lesson:
Before they can go online, tenth to twelfth graders in Harrigan's "Internet Use and Application" course spend a week reviewing class rules. They also must sign school and district acceptable use policies.

By positioning cyberspace as an extension of the classroom, "I'm able to successfully communicate what's expected, because they already know what's expected of them in school," Harrigan says.

Penalties for violating the rules can be severe—removal from class, a failing grade, and even loss of all computer privileges for the rest of a student's high school years.

Of course, accidents can happen. One day, a student looking for clip art searched on the phrase "free pictures"—which in Netspeak means something quite different.

"She clicked on a link, and she got an eyeful!" Harrigan says. "It was embarrassing—and it was an accident. You can't bust a kid for an accident."

Instead, Harrigan seized the teaching moment to caution students to examine URLs carefully before following hyperlinks.

"I tell them, if it says www.fornicate.com, then don't go there!" she says. Or, she instructs them, back out of the site quickly and notify her so that she can flag the misstep in her log.

Harrigan periodically checks Web browser history lists to see where kids have been.

Still, her biggest worry isn't questionable Web sites—it's that "kids think they're too invulnerable," she says. "They're too free in giving out information about themselves."

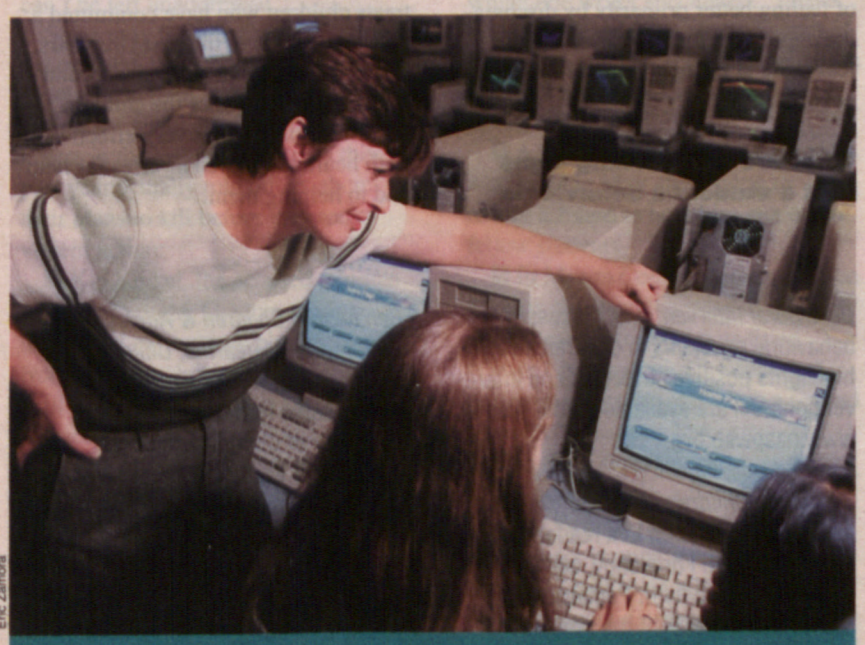
Once, Harrigan noticed a student writing an E-mail to a boy she had met in a chat room the night before, on her home computer. Harrigan warned the student about the dangers of giving out her name or address.

"I told her, 'The guy might tell you he's 17, but in reality he could be a 50-year-old pervert,'" she says.

Click:
In the end, staying out of trouble is the students' responsibility. "I can encourage, I can plead, and I can beg, but I can't control them," Harrigan says. "That's something they have to choose for themselves."

Harrigan hopes students remember the reasons behind class policies when they go online at home.

"When they leave class, they need to know there's still a right and a wrong," she says.



Eric Zamora

With 30 computers in her classroom, California teacher Cheryl Harrigan can't watch over every kid's shoulder—but she can help them learn to use good judgment online.

For More Information

Here's a sample of Harrigan's class policies:

- *If the person you see on screen is in violation of the school dress code, back out of the page.*
- *If the page you're on contains language you wouldn't use in a conversation with the principal, leave the page.*
- *You may E-mail only family, friends, or approved key pals.*

For more, visit the class at www.kings.k12.ca.us/huhsd/charriga.

New & Noteworthy

ISTE Membership Offer
The International Society for Technology in Education is educational technology's largest teacher-based organization. If you're not already a member of ISTE, NEA has arranged a special membership offer of one-third off the usual price of $58, or just $39.

As an ISTE member, you'll receive eight issues of *Learning and Leading with Technology*, seven issues of the *ISTE Update*, and three issues of the ISTE resource catalog. You'll also be eligible for discounts on ISTE books and conferences.

To take advantage of this special offer, call 800/336-5191. Mention ISTE membership offer #496 and give the name of your NEA local for verification.

You can also mail a check to ISTE, 480 Charnelton St., Eugene, OR 97403-1923. This special offer expires November 9.

Win Free Registration
Two teachers will be randomly selected to win free registration and lodging for the National School Boards Association's Technology + Learning Conference, October 29-31 in Nashville, Tennessee.

NEA will provide the conference registrations. The lodging at the Regal Maxwell House Hotel will be courtesy of Teachers.Net.

To enter, visit Teachers.Net at www.teachers.net, then E-mail kat@teachers.net with a statement about which of the Web site's chatboards is your favorite. Include your personal contact information in the E-mail.

Entries can also be mailed to Teachers.Net, 3820 Haines St., Suite 1, San Diego, CA 92109-6345. The deadline is September 10.

Talk to Us

Have a nifty classroom tip or lesson plan that uses technology? E-mail a description (under 200 words, please!) to **wiredclassroom@list.nea.org**.

Is there a Web site, CD-ROM, or piece of software you can't live without? E-mail your favorites—and why you love them—to **myfavoritetech@list.nea.org**.

Or send your responses by regular mail to *NEA Today*, or by Fax to 202/822-7206, or through the Web at www.nea.org/cet.

Respondents published here will receive a sparkling *NEA Today* mug!

Health

From the Network

The NEA Health Information Network suggests the following helpful resources.

Child Health Month

October marks Child Health Month. This year's theme, "Solutions Before Problems," is part of a three-year campaign to prevent child and adolescent alcohol use. Age-specific, developmentally appropriate, and culturally sensitive educational programs that can help children develop healthy attitudes are available from the American Academy of Pediatrics. Call 800/433-9016, ext. 7871, or visit the Web at www.aap.org.

The Gift of Life

More than 53,000 patients are on the national organ transplant waiting list, awaiting life-saving donor organs. Find out more about sharing the gift of life. The United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) provides brochures on organ donation, donor cards, lists of transplant centers, information kits, and fact sheets. Contact the UNOS Communication Department, P.O. Box 13770, Richmond, VA 23225, 888/TXINFO1. Visit the Web at www.unos.org/frame_default.asp.

HIV in the Workplace

The *Revised Labor Leader's Kit on HIV/AIDS in the Workplace* includes sections on policy, contract language, family education, and an audiocassette narrated by Patrick Stewart. For a free copy, courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's HIV Prevention Information Network, call 800/458-5231 or visit the Web at www.brta-lrta.org.

Details on Herpes

This is a video about . . . herpes is fast paced and intended to stimulate discussion and self-education among today's media-savvy young people. Comic relief is provided by "Gherpes," an animated character who repeatedly appears, disappears, and is generally annoying—much like the disease itself. $19.95 plus $4.95 s&h. Instructor's guide, $9.95 plus $1 s&h. From WAVE Communications, 800/892-8433. On the Web at www.wavemedia.com.

Why Some Students Rage

Dr. Baer Max Ackerman is a child and adolescent psychiatrist in Plano, Texas, who helps families deal with rage in young people. He spoke recently with Rena Large of the NEA Health Information Network.

What causes aggressive behavior or violence in children?

Nature and nurture interact to make up each child's individual psychology, but there's no single predetermining factor.

For example, children who grow up in an abusive home may act aggressively toward others to vicariously take revenge on those who mistreated them. Or they may become very thoughtful and considerate because they don't want to treat others as they've been treated.

On a broader societal level, the decrease in the number of two-parent families and the lack of father figures in many families may contribute to increasing aggressive behavior.

This sounds old-fashioned, but I believe it's true. Child development goes better when there are two loving parents together and when one parent—mother or father—stays at home.

How can you tell which students are time bombs?

Each individual is different, so we need to be aware of each student's unique personality, character, and logic from moment to moment. Someone who acts out violently may have no clearly detectable pre-existing symptoms. Their behavior depends on how they make sense of and feel they must respond to a particular situation or emotional experience.

All children are mean at some time in their lives—making fun of other kids, pulling pranks—but fortunately lethal violence is rare. But "misdemeanor" cruelties happen a great deal and stem from similar psychological dynamics.

It is also important to remember that kids are mean or cruel because, to a certain degree, it is fun. If they feel uncomfortable, they can "have company" and feel powerful by making someone else feel the same way.

It's the job of the parent and society to find ways to help children feel that behaving cruelly is unthinkable. Children should be taught that instead of feeling better primarily by discharging aggressive feelings, they should feel pride at being able to inhibit their hostility.

What are the warning signs that a student's behavior is escalating to violence?

It's important to be aware of the children who engage in repeat misdemeanor cruelties, especially those who seem to enjoy it. It's also useful to be alert to children who say things like "I'm not going to take this anymore" or "I'm going to get even—you'll see." Paying thoughtful attention to such children might prevent more serious problems in the future.

How can school employees help students control and deal with anger?

Schools need to have a comprehensive system of dealing with potential problems, including a process for teachers to report worrisome students.

Schools also need trained, supervised professionals to respond to troubled children and their families—and hopefully prevent a violent situation.

Often, and regrettably, the most comprehensively trained clinicians, such as child and adolescent psychiatrists, are consulted last, after something terrible has already occurred.

Generally, the most efficient way to help students and families get appropriate care is to use child psychiatrists early in the evaluation process. They can bring a unique understanding of the psychological, biological, and sociological issues that motivate children to be disruptive and hostile.

For example, I participate in a program called First Offenders, which treats children who have committed a first offense. Over the past two years, this program has prevented a second arrest in 95 percent of the children seen. This program is very effective in both hearing children's "cries for help" and in helping them.

Resources

■ *Safe Schools Manual*, an NEA publication, provides information and additional resources for advocates of safe schools and communities. For a free copy, write to NEA Human and Civil Rights, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036 or visit the Web at www.nea.org.

■ The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) provides guidelines for educators and parents for disaster planning and helping children cope after a crisis or disaster at school. A new document, *Behavioral Interventions*, discusses behavioral problems in children and highlights positive strategies and interventions. All are available on the Web at www.naspweb.org.

■ *Raising Children To Resist Violence* presents information in a reader-friendly format. For a copy, call the American Academy of Pediatrics at 847/228-5005 or visit the Web at www.aap.org/family/mnbroc.htm.

■ More than 60 fact sheets on issues such as *Understanding Violent Behavior in Children & Adolescents*, *Children and Firearms*, *Children and Divorce*, and *Stepfamily Problems* are available from the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry. Visit the Web at www.aacap.org or call 202/966-7300.

■ *Adolescence Directory On-Line* provides information on books, articles, curriculum, and other resources on conflict and violence. Visit this site, from Indiana University's Center for Adolescent Studies, at education.indiana.edu/cas/adol/conflict.html.

Rights Watch

Taking Threats Seriously

In the wake of recent school shootings, police and school officials are cracking down on students threatening violence.

The eighth grader called his English composition "The Riot." In it he described school-hating students beating their principal senseless and blowing up the school library.

The violence theme continued in his next essay—"Goin' Postal"—in which an enraged student shoots his principal seven times.

Concerned officials of the Cabrillo Unified School District in California last spring slapped the aspiring writer with a five-day suspension for making threats of violence.

But with help from the American Civil Liberties Union, the 14-year-old student has now filed a federal lawsuit claiming the punishment violates his free speech rights under the First Amendment.

School superintendent R. Mark Harris counters that the district acted out of concern that the student's essays might have been a warning sign of potential violent behavior.

"It's real scary when you see indications that kids may be contemplating doing things like this," notes Harris. "It can't be left unaddressed."

Some may feel the Cabrillo officials overreacted, but school officials have good reason to treat these kinds of threats seriously. Most of the alleged killers in the campus shootings this past year actually told others about their plans to kill before they took violent action:

- Kip Kinkel, the accused gunman from Springfield, Oregon, reportedly read aloud in literature class excerpts from his journal describing plans to "kill everybody." He also gave a talk in science class on how to build a bomb.
- The 14-year-old from Edinboro, Pennsylvania accused of murdering a science teacher during a school dance had earlier shown other students a handgun in his father's dresser and told them he planned to kill nine people he hated.
- The 13-year-old from Jonesboro, Arkansas accused of gunning down four girls and a teacher told other students beforehand that he "had some killing to do."

Unfortunately, the recent school rampages appear to be symptomatic of a dangerous new wave of student threats. But schools and police are responding in a no-nonsense manner. According to media reports:

- Two Pittsburgh seventh graders were suspended last April for distributing a "hit list" of 10 teachers the students wanted killed.
- In Miami last February, nine high school students were jailed for distributing an underground newspaper in which one writer speculated: "I have often wondered what would happen if I shot Dawson [the school principal] in the head and other teachers who have p---ed me off."
- A Wheaton, Illinois 15-year-old was jailed in May after trying to recruit a friend to help him gun down fellow students.
- In Macon County, Tennessee, two 13-year-olds were suspended in April after a teacher found a note titled "Death List" naming 15 students. A police investigation turned up a second list with 77 names.
- In three separate instances occurring the same week, officials in Fairfax County, Virginia last June suspended students for posting a "personal death list" of 17 names on a Web site, writing a note naming seven students the writer wanted to die, and threatening to put a bomb in a teacher's cabinet.
- A 15-year-old in Incline Village, Nevada was jailed for writing a note last June threatening to kill several classmates.
- In St. Charles, Missouri, police arrested three sixth grade boys last May for plotting to shoot classmates on the last day of school.
- And police in Cheshire, Connecticut last June launched an investigation into a student underground newspaper for printing a column suggesting that a science teacher "needs a serious attitude adjustment, possibly a hollow-point .45 to the head."

Bob James

Potentially violent students can be removed from the school setting (see sidebar), but this is not necessarily the best or only solution to the problem. The day before he opened fire in the Thurston High School cafeteria, Kip Kinkel had been suspended from school for bringing a gun on campus.

Kevin Dwyer, assistant director of the National Association of School Psychologists, advises: "You don't change a kid's behavior by expelling him. The real solution is to teach these students how to think, how to act, how to deal with their anger. Maybe that wasn't the job of a school in 1950, but it is now."

For its part, NEA has made school safety a top priority, producing the *Safe Schools Manual**, a valuable resource for school employees. NEA also has joined with the American Federation of Teachers to create a working group on school safety.

The joint working group plans to convene a national conference on school discipline and safety next spring, develop two videos (with a study guide) on classroom management and creating safe schools, produce a 50-state report on student discipline laws and regulations, and distribute materials produced by the project to state and local affiliates.

Though little comfort to the victims of these senseless crimes, it is important to remember that, statistically, schools are still safer places for children than their homes or neighborhoods or streets.

—Michael D. Simpson
NEA Office of General Counsel

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What About the First Amendment

The federal lawsuit now pending in California (see main article) raises the question whether schools can lawfully punish students for "merely" making threats.

The Supreme Court in 1969 recognized that students have First Amendment rights in school, but the High Court in 1986 upheld the authority of school officials to punish a student for giving a "racy" speech in a school assembly.

A student's rights of free speech, the Court said, were outweighed by the school's "interest in teaching students the boundaries of socially appropriate behavior." The school need not "tolerate indecent or offensive speech" by students, the Court concluded.

More recently, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1996 upheld the three-day suspension of a California student who had threatened her guidance counselor, saying, "If you don't give me this schedule change, I'm going to shoot you."

The court in *Lovell* v. *Poway Unified School Dist.* said "threats of physical violence are not protected by the First Amendment."

"In light of the violence prevalent in schools today," the court added, "school officials are justified in taking very seriously student threats against faculty or other students."

But can schools also punish students with disabilities for this kind of misbehavior? Yes.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), disabled students who violate school rules can be suspended for up to 10 days. And if the misconduct involves bringing a weapon to school, then the disabled student can be removed to an alternative educational setting for up to 45 days.

In addition, under the new law known as IDEA '97, a hearing officer (instead of a federal judge) can remove disabled students from the classroom for up to 45 days if the students are likely to harm themselves or others.

The new law also authorizes school officials to report criminal acts committed by IDEA students to law enforcement authorities for possible action by the criminal justice system.

—M.D.S.

The 1998-99 Resolutions

Foreword

The Constitution of the National Education Association indicates that the goals of the Association shall be the ten goals stated in the Preamble. These goals are, therefore, regularly set forth in a statement of resolutions adopted by the Representative Assembly.

Resolutions are formal expressions of opinion, intent, belief, or position of the Association. They shall set forth general concepts in clear, concise language, shall be broad in nature, shall state the positions of the Association positively and without ambiguity, and shall be consistent with the goals of the Association as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution.

In addition to policy set by resolutions, the Assembly may adopt items of new business. Standing Rule 6.K states: "New business relating to substantive policies or programs for the Association shall be specific in nature and terminal in application."

A. SERVE AS THE NATIONAL VOICE FOR EDUCATION

A-1. Public Education

The National Education Association believes that public educational opportunities for every American must be preserved and strengthened.

The Association also believes that public education is the cornerstone of our social, economic, and political structure and is of utmost significance in the development of our moral, ethical, spiritual, and cultural values. The Association further believes that each state must maintain a system of public education that prepares its citizens to —

a. Achieve functional proficiency in English, with emphasis on the development of basic reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills

b. Compute effectively to procure and/or dispense services and materials

c. Use critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills

d. Exercise attitudes of good citizenship, societal productivity, and global awareness

e. Care for the environment

f. Appreciate the aesthetic and moral qualities of life

g. Formulate values that lead to continual growth and self-fulfillment

h. Recognize and appreciate cultural, social, political, and religious differences

i. Use leisure time effectively and develop sound physical health habits

j. Develop skills in and/or an appreciation for the practical/vocational and fine arts.

The Association further believes that its members should support public education by sending their children to public educational institutions. (69, 98)

A-2. Educational Opportunity for All

The National Education Association believes that each student has the right to a free public education which should be suited to the needs of the individual and guaranteed by state constitutions and the United States Constitution. Education is a lifelong process, and public schools serve a constituency that embraces all age groups. Access and opportunities for postsecondary education should be widely available, and no qualified student should be denied such opportunities because of the cost of tuition and fees.

The Association also believes that all schools must be accredited under uniform standards established by the appropriate agencies in collaboration with the Association and its affiliates and that the accreditation process must provide sufficient flexibility to enable individual schools to respond to the needs of their students and community. The development of a periodic review of locally established programs should involve community members, parents, students, teachers, and educational support personnel. The Association further believes that individuals, at their expense, should be free to choose, to supplement, or to substitute education in privately supported, nonsegregated, nonpublic schools.

The Association further believes tax-exempt status should be denied to those institutions whose policies and/or practices prevent the integration of the institutions. (69, 97)

A-3. Understanding and Support of Public Education

The National Education Association recognizes its responsibility to promote understanding and support of public education and public education employees and to encourage wide community and parental participation in achieving and maintaining educational excellence. The Association believes that school boards have a responsibility to promote public understanding of the importance of the public schools.

The Association also believes that the success of our nation depends upon high standards of educational excellence. The Association supports high standards for student behavior and achievement, excellence in teaching, a positive school environment, and high parental expectations for both their children and the schools. The Association also recognizes its responsibility to publicize adverse educational conditions and to support efforts to improve such conditions. (69, 97)

A-4. American Education Week

The National Education Association believes that American Education Week is an important observance during which positive attention should be focused on the contributions of education and education employees. (97)

A-5. Excellence in Education

The National Education Association believes that continued success of the United States as a participatory democracy and as a world leader is dependent upon a shared national, state, community, and individual commitment to excellence in education. The Association also believes that mastery is a standard of excellence achieved when students demonstrate the ability to use what has been taught and have command of subjects sufficient for problem solving, decision making, and further educational growth. To that end, the Association reaffirms its support of high standards for teaching and learning in which the student becomes an active participant in the mastery process.

The Association believes that sufficient resources and program alternatives should be provided for the proper placement of each student so that social promotions can be prevented or minimized. (83, 97)

A-6. U.S. Department of Education

The National Education Association believes that the U.S. Department of Education must be a viable force for the maintenance and improvement of public education in the United States. The Association further believes that Association members must be fully involved in establishing goals and planning programs with the Department.

The Association further believes that internal and external attempts to dismantle and to erode the effectiveness of the Department of Education through the federal budgetary process are detrimental to the public interest. (80, 88)

A-7. Appointments by the President of the United States

The National Education Association believes that the need for quality education demands that criteria for presidential appointments in the field of education shall include a commitment to public education and significant contributions to the education community. Education employees should be included in such appointments. (70, 90)

A-8. Business Support for Public Education

The National Education Association believes that the business community and the Association should work cooperatively in promoting, planning, implementing, and evaluating school-community-business partnerships in the support of public education. The Association welcomes from the business community supplementary activities such as cooperative programs, resource assistance, release of employees for parent-teacher conferences, funding for scholarships, and the donation of specialized equipment.

The Association also believes that the use of programs that involve the marketing of and/or the promoting of products that exploit students and/or institutions should be prevented. (84, 96)

A-9. School Boards

The National Education Association believes that the composition of school boards must be representative of the population within the school district, including minority groups; that board members must be elected by the voters in the school district; and that board members must be elected from representative districts. The Association also believes that provisions should be made for parents and/or guardians of students who are attending school in a district other than their home district as part of a court-ordered interdistrict busing plan to have substantive influence on board actions and policies.

The Association further believes that student participation in a school board's deliberative process should be encouraged; however, student input in the voting process should be advisory only. Wherever a school board includes student members, the Association believes that the student members should be excluded from participating in discussions, receiving information, and voting on issues dealing with school personnel and items contained in negotiated agreements.

The Association also believes that school board meetings must be held at times and places that allow education employees, local affiliates, and the community to participate in educational decision making. (80, 97)

A-10. Public School Buildings

The National Education Association believes that closed public school buildings that have been deemed safe can be used effectively for public preschool, day care, job training, and adult education centers. The Association believes that closed public school buildings should be sold or leased only to those organizations that do not provide direct educational services to students and/or are not in direct competition with public schools. (82, 87)

A-11. Black Higher Education Institutions

The National Education Association recognizes that historically Black institutions of higher education have played a vital role in helping Americans in their efforts toward building a truly pluralistic society.

The Association believes that the programs of historically Black institutions should continue to be reviewed and updated so that they will maintain diverse and quality faculties and student bodies.

The Association urges its affiliates to be in the forefront of all efforts that seek to support, maintain, and promote these invaluable institutions, their programs, and their full participation in the mainstream of education. The Association further believes that closing, downgrading, or merging historically Black institutions would not be in the best interest of the educational community. (80, 95)

A-12. School Accountability

The National Education Association supports holding school sites accountable when other parts of a comprehensive system—district, state, and national stakeholders—are also held accountable for providing the resources and other support personnel systems and materials necessary for schools to reach their goals. An effective and fair school accountability system must focus on the school as the unit for improvement and evaluation and ensure that the best practices are encouraged and supported.

The Association believes school accountability systems must include training for education employees through staff development prior to implementation and procedures for evaluating and improving such systems. Exposure to school accountability systems should also be a part of pre-service preparation.

The Association further believes that school accountability must be implemented throughout the school community through a collaborative, interactive, and continuous process by which students and parents, educators, the public, and policymakers define and support the goals of the school.

A well-designed school accountability system—

a. Promotes educational excellence

b. Has a balanced focus combining school context, processes, and student performance to guide improvement efforts

c. Is based on a wide array of authentic data, including an examination of the resources needed and those allocated

d. Focuses on the school and its goals, not on the individual performance of the school staff or other stakeholders

e. Is consistent with school employees' rights and responsibilities as set forth in collective bargaining laws and contracts, meet and confer understandings, and/or policies

f. Is applied in a fair and equitable manner. (71, 97)

A-13. Federal Financial Support for Education

The National Education Association believes that the federal government has a legitimate and proper concern and responsibility for the quality of public education provided to its citizens.

The federal government should—

a. Ensure equality of educational opportunity for all

b. Collect basic data to be used in public schools and to engage in research, development, and consultation activities that support quality state and local education programs

c. Grant supplemental aid to states that are not able to raise adequate funds to provide all students with a high-quality education and to provide funding to support state and local government efforts in pursuit of national interests in public education.

Therefore, federal funding formulas should reflect the most current, accurate accounting of the public school population, measurements of poverty, and the state's ability to raise adequate funds. The Association also believes that funding for federal programs should be substantially increased, not merely redistributed among states.

The Association further believes that there should be federal support for education whereby:

a. The federal government assumes a full partnership role with local school districts by providing significant levels of federal funding for elementary and secondary education through a program of general aid and categorical assistance.

b. Federal education funding is clear and identifiable within the federal budget.

c. Federally funded instructional programs have maximum teacher involvement in their development at the federal level and must be implemented at the local level only after the involvement and approval of the recognized bargaining agent or local affiliate.

d. Advisory committees for federally funded programs reflect the ethnic makeup of local communities and maintain a gender balance to ensure accountability and equity. Parents, students, and educators should be included as members of these committees.

e. The amount of aid is generally predictable for long-range planning and specifically predictable for year-to-year planning.

f. Federal legislation complies with civil rights statutes and is consistent with the constitutional provision respecting the establishment of religion and provides for judicial review as to its constitutionality.

g. Categorical funding is assured in areas such as special education, bilingual/English as a second language, and the economically/educationally disadvantaged.

The Association opposes those provisions in federal legislation and/or current laws that include funds, goods, or services related to the instructional process for nonpublic schools or nonpublic school students in pre-K through secondary education. Federal monies budgeted for pre-K through secondary education must be expended solely and equitably for public education at the pre-K through secondary level. The Association also condemns and deplores federal policies and programs that serve to undermine America's historical commitment to free public education. (83, 98)

A-14. Public Education/National Defense

The National Education Association believes that maintenance of a strong system of public education is paramount to maintaining a strong U.S. national defense. Whenever there is a redirection of resources from military purposes, the Association supports a policy of economic conversion to facilitate the orderly redirection of such resources to alternative civilian uses, including education. (85, 97)

A-15. Financial Support of Public Education

The National Education Association believes that public education must be supported from public tax sources. The Association also believes that—

a. An increasing portion of public funds should be for direct instruction of the student.

b. The amount of aid must be generally predictable for long-range planning and specifically predictable for year-to-year planning.

c. Crescent programs of specific aid must be expanded and improved by consolidation and simplification of administration.

d. Tax revision favorable to public education should be encouraged and continually reviewed at every governmental level.

e. Local governing boards must be fiscally independent, and restrictive limits must not be imposed on their budgets or long-term borrowing.

f. The state and local share of finance must be derived from a tax system that is balanced and complementary in nature, includes all broad-based taxes, reduces the excessive reliance on property taxes, and protects subsistence income.

g. Provisions must be made for research, development, implementation, continuation, and improvement in education practices. Funding must be included for resources such as personnel, time for staff planning, training and development, facilities, equipment, and materials.

h. State and federal mandates affecting public education programs must be accompanied by adequate funding.

i. School trust lands should be used productively for the maximum benefit of public school students. Such trust lands must be administered with the generation of funds for public education as a primary goal. State school trust funds should be fairly compensated by the federal government for school trust lands included in national parks, monuments, or wilderness areas.

j. Funds must be provided for programs to alleviate race, gender, and sexual orientation discrimination and to eliminate portrayal of race, gender, and sexual orientation stereotypes in the public schools.

k. Public funds must not be expended for any materials used to promote race, gender, or sexual orientation stereotypes and/or bias.

l. Public funds must not be expended in institutions where either specific programs or the institution

has been found guilty of discrimination.

m. Categorical funding must be assured in areas such as special education, bilingual/English as a second language, and the economically/educationally disadvantaged.

n. Any institution, agency, or individual receiving financial aid from federal, state, or local governments must adhere to all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.

The Association opposes the use of public revenues for private, parochial, or other nonpublic pre-K through 12 schools. (77, 98)

A-16. Financial Support for Postsecondary Education

The National Education Association supports the maintenance and expansion of funding for postsecondary education, including programs of institutional and scholar support, research grants, support for the historically Black and developing institutions, and student financial assistance to assure access and choice for all qualified students—regardless of personal financial means—who wish to pursue postsecondary education. The Association believes that student need, as well as enrollment, should be a criterion for funding postsecondary education. The Association further believes that need-based student financial assistance should be available through all postsecondary education institutions as well as governmental agencies. (86, 98)

A-17. Higher Education Research and Study Grants

The National Education Association believes that both the governmental and private sectors should provide research and study grants to higher education faculties in all academic areas. Such grants should be awarded on the basis of merit without discrimination. The dissemination of grants should not be used to influence university decisions and policies.

The Association believes that the process of study and research grants provided should influence neither undergraduate nor graduate curriculums until such time as the research is completed and systematically integrated into the curriculums.

The Association further believes that our national economic well being is dependent upon the expansion of the highest quality research and training in our professional and graduate schools as well as the recruitment and training of a diverse and highly skilled workforce.

The Association further believes that academic freedom applies to research and the dissemination of research results. (85, 96)

A-18. Federal Impact Aid

The National Education Association supports funding to maintain quality education for students in school districts impacted by federal policies, lands, activities, and installations. A financial crisis exists in many impacted areas because of insufficient, temporary, year-to-year appropriations.

The Association urges a permanent solution to the financial problems of severely impacted school districts, ensuring federal support at least to the degree that their local revenues are impaired or their costs increased.

The Association also endorses the concept of a national payments-in-lieu-of-taxes program. This endorsement does not affect the Association's continued support of current impact aid programs. The establishment of any payments-in-lieu program shall not adversely affect any locality currently receiving impact aid. (70, 94)

A-19. Education of Refugee Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants

The National Education Association believes that, regardless of the immigration status of students or their parents, every student has the right to a free public education in an environment free from harassment. The Association also believes that the determination of legal residency status is the responsibility of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, not of educational systems or their employees. (80, 97)

A-20. Extracurricular Funding

The National Education Association believes that every public school student must have an opportunity to participate in school sanctioned and funded extracurricular programs.

The Association urges that equitable funds for transportation, facilities, equipment, and remuneration of staff be provided for all school-sanctioned extracurricular activities. Funding should be equitably distributed between athletic and non-athletic extracurricular activities. The Association believes that extracurricular fundraising is not an acceptable substitute for district funding of extracurricular activities. (75, 96)

A-21. Educational/Economic Stability of States

The National Education Association believes that the educational well-being of the country depends upon the economic health of each of the regions, states, and localities.

The Association supports efforts to alleviate the effects of unemployment and supports retraining and appropriate job-creation legislation.

The Association supports efforts to correct policies that contribute to the particular economic difficulties of individual regions, states, and localities. (81, 93)

A-22. Tax Reform

The National Education Association supports tax reform and believes that it should—

a. Increase tax fairness and raise revenue necessary to finance quality public education and other public services

b. Prevent excessive reliance on property tax or any other single tax

c. Reflect the findings of comprehensive studies of the total individual and corporate tax burden

d. Assure a tax burden distribution that reflects the ability to pay and that safeguards family subsistence

e. Assure that statewide uniformity in property tax effort be required

f. Provide for increased local and state funding of public education

g. Not be used to place arbitrary maximum limits on any state or local government's ability to spend or tax, particularly since such limits have a negative impact on the full funding of schools

h. Eliminate tax laws and rulings that are harmful to education employees and educational needs. (78, 96)

A-23. Financial Crisis

The National Education Association believes that free public education is in a financial crisis. The Association seeks to maintain and expand educational programs for students by seeking public and legislative financial support. The Association believes that quality education requires adequate personnel, teaching materials, and supplies as priorities to be considered in the event of financial crisis.

The Association opposes the establishment of ad hoc classrooms in the event of school closures. (75, 94)

A-24. Educational Bureaucracy

The National Education Association believes that expanding the educational bureaucracy severely limits optimal classroom instruction. Affiliates should work toward a teacher-led educational system that will reduce bureaucracy. (77, 96)

A-25. Improving Neglected Educational Facilities

The National Education Association believes that because many educational facilities are in a state of crisis, as evidenced by decay, neglect, and continuing deterioration, such institutions must be provided with the necessary financial resources to increase staff and to provide improved instructional materials and adequate physical facilities.

The Association also believes that the community, parents, guardians, students, teachers, and educational support personnel must be effectively involved in designing programs to implement positive change. (69, 97)

A-26. Charter and Nontraditional Public School Options

The National Education Association supports innovation in public education. The Association believes that when concepts such as charter schools and other nontraditional school options are proposed, all affected public school employees must be directly involved in the design, implementation, and governance of these programs.

The Association further believes that plans should not negatively impact the regular public school program and must include adequate safeguards covering contract and employment provisions for all employees, voluntary participation, health and safety standards for all students and employees, nondiscrimination and equal educational opportunity, staffing by licensed professional staff, and financial responsibility. Programs must be adequately funded, must include start-up monies, must not divert current funds from the regular public school programs, and must contain appropriate procedures for regular periodic assessment and evaluation, as well as adequate attendance and record-keeping procedures. (93, 98)

A-27. Deleterious Programs

The National Education Association believes that the following programs and practices are detrimental to public education and must be eliminated: privatization, performance contracting, tax credits for tuition to private and parochial schools, voucher plans (or funding formulas that have the same effect as vouchers), planned program budgeting systems (PPBS), and evaluations by private, profit-making groups.

The Association believes that proposals that would allow or foster the flow of public monies to private, parochial or sectarian schools; the resegregation of the schools; a selectivity in admissions; the employment of unlicensed or uncertified educators; and a weakening of collective bargaining protections are detrimental to the health and well-being of the public schools and should be defeated.

The Association also believes that tax credit programs, management-by-objective systems, block grants, and revenue sharing programs have at times been implemented in ways that are harmful to public education. The Association further believes such programs should be monitored to prevent such abuses. (74, 97)

A-28. Federally or State-Mandated Choice/Parental Option Plans

The National Education Association believes that federally or state-mandated parental option or choice plans compromise the Association's commitment to free, equitable, universal, and quality public education for every student. Therefore, the Association opposes such federally or state-mandated choice or parental option plans.

The Association believes that local districts, in partnership with state and federal governments, must provide a quality education for every student by securing sufficient funding to maintain and to enhance excellence in each local public school district.

The Association continues to support alternative programs for specific purposes in the public schools. (89)

A-29. Voucher Plans and Tuition Tax Credits

The National Education Association believes that voucher plans and tuition tax credits or funding formulas that have the same effect—under which pre-K through 12 nonpublic school education is subsidized by tax monies—undermine public education, reduce the support needed to adequately fund public education, and have the potential for racial, economic, and social segregation of children. The Association opposes all attempts to establish and/or implement such plans. (70, 96)

A-30. Media Utilization

The National Education Association believes that the broadcasting industry must serve the public interest and educational process. The Association encourages the creative and innovative use of media for improving instruction. It is essential that teachers or their designees have the right to record programs off the air and play them back on a delayed basis sufficient to meet the needs of effective teaching.

The Association further believes that the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS television), National Public Radio (NPR), and expanding cable television (CATV) should provide communication services to education. Federal regulations should guarantee the reservation of at least 20 percent of the channel capacity of CATV systems for public school access and other public purposes.

The Association urges its affiliates to become involved in the program development and utilization of each of these media resources. The Association further urges the continuation of local, state, and federal financial support for public broadcasting. (81, 96)

A-31. Community Education

The National Education Association believes that the concept of community education encourages schools to provide leadership in solving community problems.

The Association urges its state affiliates to become involved in the promotion, expansion, and implementation of community education programs in their states. (77, 86)

A-32. Rural Education

The National Education Association supports a strong rural educational system and the preservation of the community infrastructure in rural America.

The Association believes that rural areas contain a range of conditions that make them unique and supports the development of programs that recognize and deal with rural needs. The Association recognizes that equal per pupil funding may not provide equal education. The Association further believes in equal educational programs and the equitable funding of such programs. Neither shall be dependent on geographical location, density of population, or consolidation of rural schools. (76, 97)

A-33. Urban Development

The National Education Association believes that professional organizations should be concerned about the quality of life in our cities and should advocate policies or programs concerning land use, zoning, urban development, economic growth, plant closings, mass transit, rent subsidy, or other issues vitally affecting patterns of community development and subsequently the quality of education in our schools. (74, 88)

A-34. U.S. Federal Schools

The National Education Association believes that all federal schools, except those under the control of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, should come under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Education.

The Association further believes that all dependents of U.S. government employees overseas and in Section VI schools should be afforded the opportunity to attend such schools and is unalterably opposed to any attempt by Congress to privatize any of these federal schools. (80, 95)

B. ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF EDUCATION FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS

B-1. Early Childhood Education

The National Education Association supports early childhood education programs in the public schools for children from birth through age eight. The Association supports a high-quality program of transition from home and/or preschool to the public kindergarten or first grade. This transition should include communication and cooperation among parents, the preschool staff, and the public school staff. The Association believes that such programs should be held in facilities that are appropriate to the developmental needs of these children. The Association further believes that early childhood education programs should include a full continuum of services for parents and children, including child care, child development, developmentally appropriate and diversity-based curricula, special education, and appropriate bias-free screening devices. Early childhood education programs also must be sensitive to and meet the physical, social, mental, and emotional health and nutritional needs of children.

The Association believes that early childhood education programs should maintain small group size with appropriate staff/child ratios for each age. These programs must be staffed by the appropriate ratio of teachers, administrators, and support staff who are prepared in early childhood education and child development. When two half-day sessions are taught by one teacher, that total class load (for both sessions) should not exceed the number of students in a first-grade class. Males should be encouraged and recruited to enter and be actively involved in early childhood education. Preparation programs for staff should lead to credentials consistent with the educational standards in each state.

The Association recognizes the importance of parental involvement in a child's development. The Association further supports the provision of training programs that prepare parents to take an active role in the child's education. These programs should provide an awareness of the expectations that will be placed on the child as well as familiarization with new policies and procedures that the child will experience in the new environment.

The Association believes that federal legislation should be enacted to assist in organizing the implementation of fully funded early childhood education programs offered through the public schools. These programs must be available to all children on an equal basis and should include mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance.

The Association supports regulations requiring children starting kindergarten to have reached age five at the beginning of a kindergarten program.

The Association advocates the establishment of fully funded early childhood special education programs. These programs and necessary services should be readily accessible for children with disabilities and staffed by certified/licensed teachers, qualified support staff, and therapists. (75, 98)

B-2. Independent Reading Skills

The National Education Association believes that it is critical that children become independent readers in the lower elementary grades for them to succeed in school and life. Resources must be provided to each school to assist students who are not mastering reading. (98)

B-3. Middle School and Junior High Programs

The National Education Association recognizes the academic, personal, and special needs of the early adolescent or middle school learner.

The Association encourages development of a curriculum that establishes realistic academic challenges that foster positive self-esteem.

The Association further encourages the develop-

ment of guidance and counseling programs that stimulate parental and community involvement, promote health services, and promote preservice and professional development programs for educators. (76, 93)

B-4. High School Diploma/Equivalency

The National Education Association supports the concept of a high school education for all and believes that every student should earn a high school diploma or its equivalent. The Association also believes in the value of academic preparation, school attendance, and social interaction for meeting the requirements of high school graduation.

The Association believes that high school equivalency testing can be misused and have a negative impact on secondary education. The Association recognizes, however, that in some instances the use of high school equivalency tests is acceptable when the best interests of the students are served.

The Association further believes that any state or district plan to use equivalency testing as the basis for qualification for a high school diploma should be developed cooperatively by classroom teachers, administrators, and governing boards. The plan should include provisions for recommendations from the local school faculty. Recommendations should be based, as a minimum, upon achievement record, ability, and age and should be developmentally appropriate for the student. (76, 95)

B-5. Higher Education

The National Education Association supports higher education as an essential part of the education process. The Association believes that postsecondary education serves an invaluable function for intellectual development, for research and scholarship, for career preparation, and for preparation for life.

The Association supports access to postsecondary programs for all qualified students without regard to age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, military registration status, or ability to pay. The Association also believes that postsecondary institutions should not penalize degree-holding students who return to upgrade or develop new skills.

The Association further supports fully funded, guaranteed student loan and grant programs, including fully funded health care insurance. Guaranteed loans should be made available for all students. Criteria for grants should include the total financial situation of the family, other family members currently enrolled in institutions of higher education, and parents' ability to contribute financially.

The Association also believes that clear admission and graduation standards, careful student counseling, tutorial and other support services, the right to complete coursework during or after the quarter/semester missed due to documented extended illness, active participation of students in their own learning, and a thoughtfully articulated curriculum can significantly help increase the number of students successfully completing their degrees.

The Association further believes that all courses must be offered with sufficient frequency and with a sufficient number of sections to enable students to graduate within the time prescribed for each program. (80, 97)

B-6. Class Size

The National Education Association believes that excellence in the classroom can best be attained by small class size.

The Association also believes in an optimum class size of fifteen students in regular programs and a proportionately lower number in programs for students with exceptional needs. Class size maximums must be based on the type of students, subject area content, physical facilities, and other criteria. Weighted class size formulas should be implemented to reflect the inclusion of exceptional students. State departments of education should collect and report class size data that reflect the class size experienced by most students. (82, 97)

B-7. Diversity

The National Education Association believes that our diverse society enriches all individuals. Similarities and differences among races, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, size, occupation, and marital, parental, or economic status form the fabric of our society.

The Association also believes that education should increase tolerance and foster an appreciation of the various qualities that pertain to people as individuals or members of a group.

The Association further believes in the importance of observances, programs, and curricula that accurately portray and recognize the roles, contributions, cultures, and history of these diverse groups and individuals.

The Association further encourages affiliates and members to become part of programs and observances that may include cultural and heritage celebrations and/or history months. (95, 97)

B-8. Racism, Sexism, and Sexual Orientation Discrimination

The National Education Association believes in the equality of all individuals. Discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as race, gender, immigration status, disability, ethnicity, occupation, and sexual orientation must be eliminated.

The Association also believes that plans, activities, and programs for education employees, students, parents, and the community should be developed to identify and eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in all educational settings. Such plans, activities, and programs must—

a. Increase respect, understanding, acceptance, and sensitivity toward individuals and groups in a diverse society composed of such groups as American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asians and Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Hispanics, women, gays and lesbians, and people with disabilities

b. Eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in the curriculum, textbooks, resource and instructional materials, activities, etc.

c. Foster the use of nondiscriminatory, nonracist, nonsexist and nonstereotypical language, resources, practices, and activities

d. Eliminate institutional discrimination

e. Integrate an accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of all groups throughout history across the curriculum, particularly groups who have been underrepresented historically

f. Identify how prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination have limited the roles and contributions of individuals and groups, and how these limitations have challenged and continue to challenge our society

g. Eliminate subtle practices that favor the education of one student over another on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation

h. Encourage all members of the educational community to examine assumptions and prejudices that might limit the opportunities and growth of students and education employees

i. Offer positive and diverse role models in our society, including the recruitment, hiring, and promotion of diverse education employees in our public schools.

The Association encourages its affiliates to develop and implement training programs on these matters. (96, 98)

B-9. American Indian/Alaska Native Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of American Indian/Alaska Native children require the direct involvement of parents, Native educators, tribal leaders, and other Native groups in developing programs that preserve the rich heritage of their cultures.

The Association believes that funding for American Indian/Alaska Native education must provide for improvements. The Association supports the movement toward self-determination by American Indians/Alaska Natives provided that such programs are voluntary. Any termination of federal support as either a direct or an indirect result of efforts to extend self-determination is opposed.

The Association believes in efforts that provide for—

a. Involvement and control of the education of American Indian/Alaska Native students by their parents, communities, and educators

b. Opportunities for higher education for all American Indian/Alaska Native students through direct governmental assistance in graduate and undergraduate programs

c. Involvement of American Indians/Alaska Natives in lobbying efforts for federal programs

d. Protection and maintenance of the integrity of American Indian/Alaska Native families and their tribal cultures so that, if a child has to be removed from his or her home, placement should be determined by the child's tribe

e. Recognition of American Indian/Alaska Native educators as role models

f. Involvement of American Indians/Alaska Natives in teacher training programs dealing with cultural pluralism and Native values

g. American Indian/Alaska Native involvement in developing multicultural learning centers at higher education institutions.

h. English proficiency programs that are designed to meet the language needs of American Indian/Alaska Native students

i. Instruction in treaty rights and traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering practices by American Indians/Alaska Natives

j. Assistance to local and state associations in meeting the educational needs of American Indian/Alaska Native students

k. Coordination with American Indian/Alaska Native organizations and concerned agencies that promote the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of the American Indian/Alaska Native people

l. Dissemination of information and programs that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of American Indians/Alaska Natives

m. Control of Native lands by American Indians/Alaska Natives. (76, 96)

B-10. Hispanic Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of Hispanic children require the direct involvement of Hispanic educators, parents, and community leaders in developing programs that meet the cultural, language, and learning characteristics of these children.

The Association believes in efforts that provide for —

a. Programs establishing appropriate educational opportunities for Hispanic students

b. Grants and scholarships for higher education that will facilitate the recruitment, entry, and retention of Hispanics

c. Recognition of Hispanic educators as role models

d. Hiring and promotion of Hispanic educators at all levels of the education profession

e. The recruitment, training, and employment of bilingual teachers, counselors, and other professional and support staff to meet the needs of Hispanic students

f. English proficiency programs that are designed to meet the language needs of Hispanic students

g. Dissemination of information and programs that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of Hispanics.

The responsibility for developing and implementing programs for Hispanic children should be realized by state and local agencies, regardless of the availability of federal funds. (72, 96)

B-11. Asian and Pacific Islander Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of Asian and Pacific Islander children require the development of programs that preserve the rich heritage of their cultures.

The Association also believes in efforts that provide for the —

a. Preservice and continuing education of teachers

b. Development of curriculum and instructional materials and programs, including English proficiency programs that are designed to meet the language needs of Asian and Pacific Islander students

c. Education of Asian and Pacific Islander adult refugees

d. Dissemination of programs and information that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of Asian and Pacific Islanders

e. Recognition of Asian and Pacific Islander educators as role models.

The Association encourages opportunities to preserve, promote, and perpetuate Asian and Pacific Islander heritage and culture. (79, 97)

B-12. Black American Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of Black American children require the direct involvement of Black American educators, parents, community leaders, and groups to assure the development of adequate and equal educational programs.

The Association believes that the infusion of Black studies and/or Afrocentric curricula into the instructional program acknowledges the contributions of African Americans to history and Africa as an integral part of world history. Further, the Association believes that these curricula must show a correlation among social, historical, political, and economic developments and events regarding Africa, African-Americans, Europeans, and their descendants worldwide.

The Association also believes in efforts that provide for —

a. The preservation of Black heritage and culture

b. Funding of scholarships to facilitate the entry of Black students into the teaching profession

c. Recognition of Black educators as role models

d. Recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of Black educators, especially Black males at all levels of the education profession

e. Involvement of Black educators in developing educational materials used in classroom instruction

f. English proficiency programs in the regular instructional process for those Black students experiencing difficulty with standard English

g. Programs that address the alarming dropout rate among Black male students and the disproportionate teen pregnancy rate among Black female students and encourage continued education, thereby increasing their participation in the work force

h. Development of athletic programs that promote educational excellence, not just athletic power

i. Opposition to the resegregation of the public schools through special classes

j. Dissemination of information and programs that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of the Black American. (81, 96)

B-13. Discriminatory Academic Tracking

The National Education Association believes that the use of discriminatory academic tracking based on socioeconomic status, race, or gender must be eliminated in all public school settings. The Association urges its affiliates to oppose these practices. (88, 93)

B-14. Equal Opportunities Through Mathematics and Science Education

The National Education Association believes that mathematics education and science education are means of helping women and minorities enjoy equal opportunities and equitable treatment for full employment and full participation in our society.

The Association supports the development and maintenance of gender-free and culturally unbiased mathematics and science programs that meet the needs of women, people with disabilities, and ethnic groups. The Association further encourages the recruitment of females and minorities to enroll in mathematics and science courses, to participate actively in those courses, and to become professionals in those fields. (92, 98)

B-15. Left-Handed Students

The National Education Association believes in meeting the needs of all students in the public schools, including left-handed students. Toward this end, the Association and its affiliates urge appropriate governing agencies to provide desks, scissors, and all other materials and instruments necessary for left-handed students to achieve on an equal basis with right-handed students.

The Association strongly recommends preservice preparation and staff development for education employees that present strategies for handwriting instruction of left-handed students. Such training should also address sensitizing instructional staff to the needs and problems of left-handed students. (79, 95)

B-16. Education of Migrants

The National Education Association believes that migrant workers and their children are entitled to educational opportunities that address their diverse and unique educational needs.

The Association advocates the implementation of bilingual/bicultural and remedial instructional programs that address the individual instructional needs of migrant students in the United States, regardless of the availability of federal and state funds to support such programs. (75, 96)

B-17. Equity for Incarcerated Persons

The National Education Association believes that incarcerated persons, regardless of gender, are entitled to equal access to educational, recreational, and rehabilitative programs within all correctional systems. (90)

B-18. Alternative Programs for At-Risk and/or Special Needs Students

The National Education Association recognizes that there must be increased development and maintenance of alternative programs to meet the needs of at-risk and/or special needs students, prekindergarten through adult. The Association recommends early and appropriate identification and placement of these students. Teachers and administrators should receive necessary training in diagnostic processes and alternative methods of teaching and learning. Appropriate training should be provided to educational support staff also.

Programs should emphasize a broad range of activities for responding to students' differing behavioral patterns, interests, needs, and learning styles. These programs must be evaluated on stated objectives. Teachers in these programs must have a major role in designing the objectives and evaluations and working with appropriate school and community personnel to execute these objectives and evaluations.

The Association urges its affiliates to seek adequate compensation, planning time, materials, and facilities for teachers and counselors in these programs.

The Association supports the efforts of its affiliates to negotiate and legislate for the training of teachers seeking additional certification and hiring of an increased number of teachers with education in special areas.

In higher education settings, faculty and educational support personnel who are working with special needs students should be provided with appropriate resources to accommodate these students' special requirements.

The Association encourages its state affiliates to seek legislation that would require any person offering services to remediate, correct, or ameliorate reading, speech, language, behavioral, emotional, or learning disabilities, or related problems to be licensed under regulations of each state's department of public instruction or other appropriate agency. (77, 97)

B-19. Gifted, Talented, and Creative Students

The National Education Association believes there must be increased development of fully funded educational programs for gifted, talented, and creative students.

The Association further believes that educators need training in selecting reliable methods of identifying and teaching these students. Such identification shall not discriminate on any basis other than the exceptionality being identified. The Association also believes that training programs in gifted and talented education must be provided for all appropriate school employees to ensure support for such programs.

The Association urges local and state affiliates to encourage the development and implementation of such programs and methods to ensure that these special need areas are met. (80, 94)

B-20. Educational Programs for Limited English Proficiency Students

The National Education Association believes that limited English proficiency (LEP) students must have available to them programs that address their unique needs and that provide equal opportunity to all students, regardless of their primary language. Programs for LEP students should emphasize English proficiency while concurrently providing meaningful instruction in all other curriculum areas.

The Association also believes that LEP students should be placed in bilingual education programs to receive instruction in their native language from qualified teachers until such time as English proficiency is achieved. If no bilingual programs are available, these students should be taught in English-as-a-second-language (ESL) programs designed to meet their specific needs. Students should not be enrolled in special education classes solely because of linguistic differences.

The Association believes that model bilingual education programs, in which language minority students demonstrate an increase in English language acquisition and academic achievement throughout the grade levels, should be promoted and supported at the federal, state, and local levels. Further, the Association advocates full funding of all instructional materials, resources, and programs for LEP students, as well as the training of education personnel to work with these students. The school district or other appropriate agency should provide released time for the training of teachers who instruct LEP students.

Educators, through a bargaining or other bilateral decision-making process, must be fully involved in the development and implementation of programs serving these students, including the assignment of teachers and the terms and conditions of their employment. Teachers should be compensated at the teacher's hourly rate of pay for any additional time spent in training. They should also be reimbursed for the cost of tuition, textbooks, and travel incurred in such training.

The Association values bilingual and multilingual competence and supports programs that assist individuals in attaining and maintaining proficiency in their native language before and after they acquire proficiency in English. (81, 97)

B-21. Speakers of Nonstandard English

The National Education Association believes that students who enter school as speakers of nonstandard dialects are learners with unique needs, and these needs must be provided for in the overall program in each local school district. The Association also believes that programs for these students must provide equal opportunity, should emphasize proficiency in standard English that provides them the opportunity to succeed in all aspects of daily life, and should concurrently provide meaningful instruction in all other curriculum areas. The Association advocates programs that begin with the linguistic proficiencies demonstrated by entering students, and build a program from that starting point.

The Association further believes that, in all cases, the students' linguistic and/or cultural backgrounds must be respected within the school setting. Under no circumstances should students who speak nonstandard dialects be enrolled in special education classes solely because of linguistic differences. (97)

B-22. Education for All Students with Disabilities

The National Education Association supports a free, appropriate public education for all students with disabilities in a least restrictive environment, which is determined by maximum teacher and parent involvement. There must be a full continuum of placement options and services/delivery models available to students with disabilities. In order to implement federal special education legislation effectively, the Association recognizes that:

a. The educational environment, using appropriate instructional materials, support services, and pupil personnel services, must match the learning needs of both students with and students without disabilities.

b. Student placement must be based on individual needs rather than on available space, funding, or local philosophy of a school district, must be examined on a regular basis to ensure appropriateness, and should not be made disproportionately by ethnicity or gender. Necessary building/staff modifications must be provided to facilitate such placement.

c. Regular and special education classroom teachers must have a major role in determining an individual education program (IEP) and the appropriateness of educational methods, materials, professional development, and supportive services and must receive a copy of the IEP.

d. Regular and special education teachers, pupil personnel staff, administrators, educational support personnel, and parents must share in planning and implementing the IEP. Prior to implementation, all necessary educational materials, professional development, and supportive services must be provided.

e. Students with physical disabilities and/or medical needs requiring nursing procedures must have their medical needs met by certified/professional school nurses.

f. All impacted staff members must have an appeal procedure regarding the implementation of the IEP, especially in terms of student placement. The procedure must include the right to have the dissenting opinion recorded and attached to the IEP.

g. Suspension and expulsion policies and practices used by local education agencies must be applied consistently to both students with and students without disabilities where misconduct is shown to be unrelated to either the disabling condition or to improper placement.

h. A plan recognizing individual differences must be used in a systematic evaluation and reporting of program development.

i. Limitations must be made in class size, using methods such as weighted formulas, modified scheduling, and/or curriculum design to accommodate the demands of each IEP.

j. All teachers who serve students with disabilities must have scheduled access to resource personnel, instructional assistants, paraprofessionals, co-teachers, and special education teachers.

k. The student's IEP should not be used as criteria for the evaluation of education employees.

l. Communications must be maintained among all involved parties.

m. Staff must not be reduced.

n. All staff must be adequately prepared for their roles through appropriate licensing and ongoing professional development programs.

o. Incentives for participation in professional development activities should, as mandated by law, be made available for education employees.

p. Education employees, as mandated by law, must be appointed to local and state advisory bodies on special education.

q. Education employees must be allowed to take part in the U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services on-site visits to states. Education employees should be invited to these meetings.

r. Local associations and education employees must be recruited, trained, and involved in monitoring school system compliance with federal special education legislation.

s. Adequate released time or funded additional time must be made available so that teachers can carry out the increased demands placed upon them by federal special education legislation.

t. Collective bargaining and other means should be used to minimize the potentially severe impact on staff that results from the implementation of special education legislation.

u. Benefits for staff working with students with disabilities must be negotiated through collective bargaining agreements and must be honored.

v. Full funding must be provided by local, state, and federal governments. (78, 95)

B-23. Educational Programs for Adolescent Parents

The National Education Association believes that school districts must meet the educational needs of adolescent students who are parents or who are about to become parents. Such students should not be discriminated against or denied equal educational opportunities.

The Association recommends programs for these students that include —

a. Flexible scheduling and attendance policies

b. Appropriate guidance in continuing/alternative education programs and productive employment

c. Development of self-esteem

d. Promotion of sound health practices regarding nutrition, substance abuse, exercise, family planning, and parenting skills

e. On-site child care services. (87, 97)

B-24. Homebound Instruction

The National Education Association believes that homebound students must receive instruction that follows the regular curriculum. This instruction must be implemented, documented, monitored, and assessed by a licensed teacher. The Association also believes that credits earned through such homebound instruction should be accepted toward promotion and/or graduation requirements. (88, 98)

B-25. Correspondence Programs

The National Education Association believes that state and local school correspondence programs that are funded by state or local school districts must be implemented by licensed educators. These alternative programs must use a curriculum approved by the state education agency. A student's progress must be documented and monitored by a licensed educator. Such approved courses must be transferable as graduation requirements for the participant. (88, 93)

B-26. Youth and Adult Training Programs

The National Education Association believes that the public schools should be involved as an equal partner with government, labor, business, agriculture, and community-based groups in youth and adult employment and training programs. The Association further believes that these programs should supplement, and not supplant, the vocational programs provided in the public schools.

The Association further believes that the use of funds for and duration of these programs should be flexible in order to accommodate the differing learning needs of students. The amount of funding should be predictable in order to facilitate year-to-year planning. These programs should provide opportunities for women, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities in nontraditional occupations. (80, 91)

B-27. Education Through Service Learning and Community Service

The National Education Association believes that learning through voluntary community service should be encouraged as an integral part of a student's education. Participation by students in community service and service learning programs may be required for high school graduation or made available for elective credit. The Association also believes that school districts should work with community groups to provide students with the opportunity to participate in such programs.

Education employees who supervise students involved in these programs should be given appropriate compensation, planning time, program support, recognition, and time to evaluate the service and learning goals. Participation of education employees in such programs should be on a voluntary basis. (90, 97)

B-28. Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps

The National Education Association believes that the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs, which exist within the public schools, must meet all local and state educational standards and policies, including the employment of fully licensed teaching personnel. Such programs shall be subject to and conform to the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement. Any programs that currently do not meet said conditions shall be brought into compliance. (97, 98)

B-29. Multicultural Education

The National Education Association believes that multiculturalism is the process of valuing differences and incorporating the values identified into behavior for the goal of achieving the common good. The Association also believes that multicultural education is a way of helping students perceive the cultural diversity of the United States so that they may develop pride in their own cultural legacy and awaken to the ideals embodied in the cultures of their neighbors. Multicultural education should promote the recognition of individual and group differences and similarities in order to reduce racism, ethnic prejudices, and discrimination and to develop self-esteem as well as respect for others.

The Association further believes that multicultural education encompasses at least three things: an idea or concept, an educational reform movement, and a process. As an idea or concept, multicultural education assumes that all students can learn. As an educational reform movement, multicultural education seeks to develop an entire school environment that is inclusive of cultural considerations (e.g., curriculum, instructional materials, learning and testing, respect for cultural differences, etc.). As a process, the development of a multicultural school environment is ever evolving and ongoing. (81, 98)

B-30. Global Education

The National Education Association believes that global education increases respect for and awareness of the earth and its people. Global education imparts information about cultures and an appreciation of our interdependency in sharing the world's resources to meet mutual human needs.

The Association also believes that curriculum and instruction about regional and international conflicts must present a balanced view, include historical context, and demonstrate relevancy and sensitivity to all people. The achievement of this goal requires the mastery of global communication and development of an appreciation of the common humanity shared by all peoples.

The Association further believes that the goal of appreciation of and harmony with our global neighbors depends on a national commitment to strengthening the capability of the educational system to teach American children about the world. (95, 98)

B-31. Foreign/World Language Education

The National Education Association believes that foreign/world language instruction is a vital part of the total educational process. Students must be offered the opportunity to learn other languages early in their educational experience.

The Association supports the maintenance of current programs and the further encouragement and development of foreign/world language instruction and international studies at all educational levels.

The Association recognizes the need for teacher training programs for foreign/world language teachers and supports teacher and student exchange programs. (81, 97)

B-32. Career Education

The National Education Association believes that a goal of public education is to provide all individuals, preschool through adulthood, opportunities to become effective, responsible, productive citizens. To achieve this goal, career education must be interwoven into the total educational system and should include programs in gender-free career awareness and exploration to aid students in career course selection. These programs should be combined with cooperative efforts on the part of educators and leaders from labor, business, and the community to provide school-to-work experiences for students.

The Association also believes that educational programs for all students should be developed that enhance self-esteem, assure equal opportunity for career development, and offer exploratory experiences in a variety of careers. (76, 98)

B-33. Vocational Education

The National Education Association believes that preparation of students for vocations and productive jobs should be a responsibility of secondary and higher education. Educational programs that assure equal opportunity for occupational development and encourage students to consider nontraditional vocations should be developed for all students at all levels. A continuing comprehensive program for training, retraining, advancement, and promotion should be provided for students who have completed minimal state attendance requirements.

The Association supports vocational and technical education as a major component of education and advocates that every student have the opportunity to enroll in such classes without restrictions. To be effective, vocational and technical education should be preceded by career awareness and exploration programs. These courses should be coordinated and integrated with traditionally academic courses and industrial and practical arts education courses. These academic programs and industrial programs should be combined, when appropriate, with cooperative efforts on the part of educators and industrial and business leaders to provide school-to-work experiences for students.

The Association also believes that adequate resources must be provided to maintain, enhance, and expand quality vocational education programs, prepare students for a high-technology environment, and purchase up-to-date equipment. The Association further believes that the involvement of education employees, private sector employment and training program personnel, and the business community is essential to the development of vocational education programs. (76, 98)

B-34. Fine Arts Education

The National Education Association believes that artistic expression is basic to an individual's intellectual, aesthetic, and emotional development. The Association also believes that fine arts transcend cultural barriers, foster multicultural understanding, and enhance critical thinking skills. The Association, therefore, believes that every elementary and secondary school curriculum must include a balanced, comprehensive, and sequential program of fine arts instruction for all students taught by a licensed specialist in a facility or room designed and equipped for that purpose. Resources must be provided to maintain and upgrade materials and provide for emerging technologies.

The Association urges its state affiliates to become involved in the promotion, expansion, and implementation of an academic fine arts program in the curriculum. (80, 96)

B-35. Physical Education

The National Education Association believes that physical activity and exercise are essential for good health and must be encouraged during the developmental years of students. The Association also believes that a comprehensive program of physical education should be provided daily in grades pre-K through 12 in or on facilities designed for that purpose. Physical education programs and curricula should follow the national guidelines as set by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance and the National Association of Sport and Physical Education Programs and Curricula, should be developmentally appropriate, sequential, cooperative in nature, and culturally sensitive, and should—

a. Emphasize physical activity, fitness, exercise, and good health; skills of sports, games, dance, and basic movement; and related concepts and knowledge

b. Assess students, including physical fitness testing, at least twice a year as a culmination of preparatory activities

c. Provide for the special needs of students with low fitness, physical disabilities, or learning disabilities

d. Be taught by teachers licensed in physical education. (91, 98)

B-36. Family Life Education

The National Education Association recognizes the myriad family structures of our society and the impact of these family structures and other close personal relationships on the quality of individual lives and upon society. The Association further recognizes the importance of education in the maintenance and promotion of stable, functional, healthy families and the emotional, physical, and mental health of people within these families.

The Association believes that programs should be established for both students and parents and supported at all educational levels to promote—

a. The development of self-esteem and positive self-concept in individuals of all ages in various family roles

b. Learning and practicing positive interpersonal communication skills and conflict resolution

c. Education in human growth and development

d. Positive parenting techniques that include strategies to deal effectively with violent behavior

e. An understanding of societal issues and problems related to children, spouses, parents, older generation family members, and other family members.

The Association also believes that education in these areas must be presented as part of an anti-biased, culturally-sensitive program. (94, 98)

B-37. Sex Education

The National Education Association believes that the developing child's sexuality is continually and inevitably influenced by daily contacts, including experiences in the school environment. The Association recognizes that sensitive sex education can be a positive force in promoting physical, mental, emotional, and social health and that the public school must assume an increasingly important role in providing the instruction. Teachers and health professionals must be qualified to teach in this area and must be legally protected from censorship and lawsuits.

The Association urges that formal sex education should include parent orientation and be planned and implemented with careful attention to developmental needs, appropriateness to community settings and values, and respect for individual differences.

The Association also believes that to facilitate the realization of human potential, it is the right of every individual to live in an environment of freely available information and knowledge about sexuality and encourages affiliates and members to support appropriately established sex education programs. Such programs should include information on sexual abstinence, birth control and family planning, diversity of culture, diversity of sexual orientation, parenting skills, prenatal care, sexually transmitted diseases, incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, the effects of substance abuse during pregnancy, and problems associated with and resulting from pre-teen and teenage pregnancies. (69, 98)

B-38. HIV/AIDS Education

The National Education Association believes that educational institutions should establish comprehensive human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) education programs as an integral part of the school curriculum. HIV/AIDS education must include education about all means of transmission, including unprotected sex and unsanitary methods of tattooing, body piercing, and intravenous (IV) drug use. Information on prevention options must include abstinence and medically accepted protective devices. Instruction in decision-making skills to assist students in correlating health information and personal behavior is essential.

The Association also believes that proper implementation of these programs requires education employee training and input. These programs should be presented by properly licensed/trained personnel and should be planned with the input of parents and other community representatives. (87, 98)

B-39. Lifesaving Techniques

The National Education Association believes that education employees and students should be trained in basic emergency lifesaving techniques. Such training should be included in both school curriculum and staff development. (82, 96)

B-40. Environmental Education

The National Education Association believes that the environment must be protected. The Association urges the establishment and maintenance of federal wilderness areas, recreational areas, refuge areas, and designated local green areas. The Association supports educational programs that promote—

a. The concept of the interdependence of humanity and nature

b. An awareness of the effects of past, present, and future population growth patterns on world civilization, human survival, and the environment

c. The protection of endangered, threatened, and rare species

d. The protection of the earth's finite resources

e. Solutions to such problems as pollution, global warming, ozone depletion, and acid precipitation and deposition

f. The use of reusable and recyclable products and discourage the use of disposable products

g. An understanding of energy, alternative energy sources, and energy conservation

h. The use of disposal methods that do not contaminate the environment

i. The recognition of and participation in such activities as Earth Day, Arbor Day, and Energy Education Day

j. The understanding of the value of the world's ecosystems.

The Association urges its affiliates to support environmental programs in school systems and educational institutions and supports legislation and local policies that ensure a safe and healthy environment. (73, 98)

B-41. Democracy and Citizenship Education

The National Education Association believes that democratic ideals should be practiced as part of the total education process. The following concepts should be an integral part of the curriculum within public schools and other educational institutions:

a. The dignity and worth of the individual

b. Due process of law

c. Rule of the majority tempered by respect for minority rights

d. Individual responsibility

e. Equal justice under the law

f. Civil liberties as guarantors of individual rights

g. One-person—one-vote

h. Active citizen participation in all aspects of public affairs.

The Association encourages teachers, lawyers, court personnel, and others to work together to develop appropriate materials, including information about the justice system and constitutional issues, in order to teach students to be responsible citizens. (84, 98)

B-42. Labor Movement Education

The National Education Association believes that the struggles of working men and women to establish unions and the influence of the labor movement on the growth of the United States should be an integral part of the curriculum in our schools.

The Association urges teachers, curriculum committees, and authors to include material that accurately presents the important contributions to our country's history and growth that have been provided by the unions involved in the labor movement and the individuals who led that movement. (88, 96)

B-43. Metric System

The National Education Association believes in the adoption of the International System of Units (SI metric system). The Association advocates that the SI system be taught at all educational levels. (69, 96)

B-44. Accurate United States Maps

The National Education Association believes that all visual representations using maps of the United States should depict all fifty states and Puerto Rico in their correct geographic location and relative size. (95)

B-45. Driver Education

The National Education Association believes that driver education courses that include both classroom and behind-the-wheel experiences should be part of the education of all students and should be taught by teachers licensed in driver education. (80, 98)

B-46. Education on Peace and the Dangers of Nuclear Proliferation

The National Education Association believes that age-appropriate instructional materials on the establishment of peace and the understanding of nuclear proliferation need to be developed. These materials should include activities dealing with peaceful resolution of conflict, the effects of nuclear weaponry, strategies for disarmament, and methods to achieve peace.

The Association believes that the United States and the world need to take a stand for peace and international understanding. The development of educational programs is a first step in that direction. (82, 97)

B-47. Genocide

The National Education Association deplores any act of genocide, defined as "the deliberate and systematic eradication of a racial, political, cultural, or religious group." Acts of genocide must be acknowledged and taught in order to provide insight into how such inhumanity develops, prevent its occurrence, and preclude its recurrence. (93, 98)

B-48. The Holocaust

The National Education Association believes that a way to prevent events that have caused great human misery, such as the Holocaust, is to teach all students about the Holocaust not only as an historical event but also as a means of providing insight into how inhumanity of this magnitude develops. The Holocaust must be taught so that never again can doubt of its occurrence be raised and never again can like action occur. (81, 93)

B-49. Homework

The National Education Association supports the assignment of homework as one means of reinforcing and furthering classroom instruction and learning.

The Association believes that the type and the amount of homework assigned should be determined by the classroom teacher and be appropriate to a student's developmental level. (85, 90)

B-50. Discipline

The National Education Association believes that a safe and orderly environment, in which students are treated with dignity, will provide them with a positive learning experience. Effective disciplinary procedures enhance high expectations and quality instruction, thereby promoting self- control and responsible behavior in students while ensuring the right of all students to due process and an orderly learning environment.

The Association promotes the study, development, and funding of a variety of effective discipline procedures. The Association believes that its local affiliates, in conjunction with other stakeholders, should develop guidelines for effective disciplinary techniques. The Association also believes that governing boards, in conjunction with local affiliates, parents/guardians, students, staff, and community members, should develop policies and standards that provide the necessary administrative support to education employees for the maintenance of a positive, safe school environment.

The Association condemns the misuse of discipline as a means of excluding students from the school setting until other methods of behavioral intervention have been exhausted. This does not preclude the removal of the offender from the school setting to protect other students and education employees. Disruptive students should not be placed in vocational, technical, unified arts, or special education classes solely for the purpose of solving disciplinary problems. The Association further believes that corporal punishment should not be used as a means of disciplining students. (75, 98)

B-51. Conflict Resolution Education

The National Education Association supports the use of proven conflict-resolution strategies, instructional materials, and activities in the curriculum, for classroom procedures, on the playground, and at school-sponsored extracurricular activities to encourage nonviolent resolution of interpersonal and societal conflicts.

The Association encourages the development of programs to train education employees in methods of nonviolent conflict resolution. In addition, the Association recommends the use of conflict resolution processes to resolve disputes and disagreements between and among all education employees so that they can model these processes. (86, 97)

B-52. Standards for Student Learning

The National Education Association believes in high standards that describe clear expectations for what students should know and be able to do. Throughout the implementation of content and performance standards, all students must be provided the instructional opportunities and learning conditions necessary to attain the standards. The Association supports the development and use of assessment systems that are related to the standards. These assessment systems should be regularly reviewed to assure validity and usefulness.

The Association also believes that state and local affiliates must participate in the planning, development, implementation, and refinement of standards, conditions, and assessments to ensure that—

a. Parents, community members, students, and school personnel are involved

b. Full funding and adequate resources are provided throughout the process

c. Assessment systems enable teachers to evaluate each student's progress toward attaining standards

d. Appropriate attention is given to the needs and developmental levels of each student

e. Ongoing professional development is provided for teachers and educational support personnel

f. Students, parents, school personnel, community members, and governments share the accountability. (97, 98)

B-53. Standardized Testing of Students

The National Education Association believes that standardized tests should only be used to improve the quality of education and instruction for students. Standardized tests are most useful when selected by educational professionals closest to the classroom and integrated with assessment information specific to local programs. Affiliates should advocate the design and use of a variety of developmentally appropriate assessment techniques that are bias-free, reliable, and valid. When a test is mandated at the state or the national level, it should only be used to evaluate programs toward meeting state or national standards and/or goals.

The Association opposes the use of standardized tests when—

a. Used as the criterion for the reduction or withholding of any educational funding

b. They inappropriately compare students, teachers, programs, schools, communities, and states

c. Used as a single criterion for high-stakes decision making

d. They do not match the developmental levels or language proficiency of the student

e. Student scores are used to evaluate teachers or to determine compensation or employment status

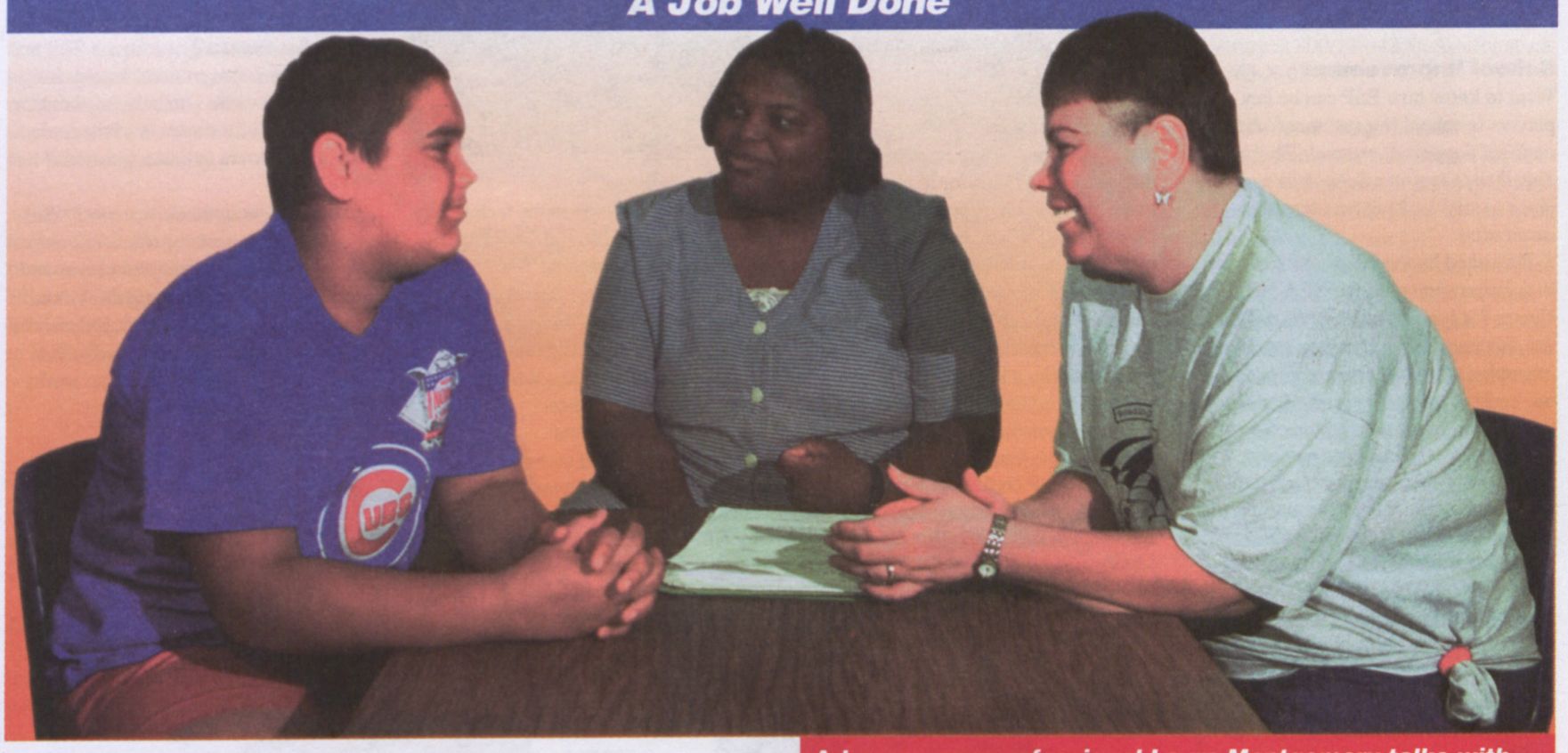
f. Programs are specifically designed to teach to the test.

The administration of a standardized test includes the responsibility to educate the stakeholders in the purpose of the test, the meaning of test results, and the accurate interpretation of conclusions. (78, 97)

B-54. Student Assessment Programs in Higher Education

The National Education Association believes that student assessment programs in higher education, properly designed and administered, can be crucial

A Job Well Done



Jeff Mitchell

Arkansas paraprofessional Laura Montgomery talks with local parent Sheryl Doutt and her son, Aaron.

Linking Home & School

This home/school consultant is living proof that ESP folks make a difference for kids every day.

Name:
Laura Montgomery

Job title:
Home/school consultant

Experience:
11 years

NEA local affiliate:
Pulaski (Arkansas) Association of Support Staff

What people don't understand about my job:
Nobody knows if I'm a counselor, a teacher, or a social worker.

What I do:
I'm a liaison between parents and school. I identify disadvantaged students and increase their parents' involvement in the educational process, as well as bring building administrators and teachers into contact with these parents.

I make home visits to help disadvantaged families meet their needs—from school supplies and food to medical care for the kids and GEDs and jobs for the parents.

I also do things like run parent group sessions, drive children to the dentist, and bring parents to school for conferences and tours.

My credentials:
A Bachelor's degree and license in social work

Continuing education:
I've completed 18 hours of work toward a Master's in counseling and attend numerous workshops to maintain my social work license, including a recent two-day session in crisis counseling.

How I help students achieve:
I take homework to sick children, deliver materials like pencils and paper to the home, and help parents develop their children's study skills—using both videos and "one-on-ones" on how to help a child do homework.

And, to help disadvantaged children gain social skills, I established a very effective "Adopt a Child" program that enables a stable family to take a child to events like movies, family gatherings, or religious services.

A challenge I have met:
When I started this job, I saw a brother and sister eat out of a trash can. Through a home visit, I found that their mother and other siblings were locked in the house by an abusive, alcoholic father and lacked both food and utilities.

I did lots of referrals, found a new residence for the family, helped the mom establish an income, and got the five children tested for skills and properly placed in school. Two of the children have now graduated high school with 2.5 and 3.0 grade point averages—one just completed the first year of college. The mother and kids now live in a new home. Because the mom is mentally limited, I've taught the oldest children how to run the household.

How I team with teachers:
I'm with teachers all the time, and they respect my position and what I do with parents. I attend parent-teacher conferences, if needed, as a parent advocate, and I also attend all teacher workshops.

To contact Laura Montgomery, send E-mail to Lauramtg@yahoo.com.

Tips from Laura Montgomery

On Kids & Colleagues

On dealing with kids:
Kids come from many home situations, and sometimes they'll get on the bus crying and not talking. Our bus drivers have learned over the years that often kids do open up to them, since they're the first people the kids see each day. That's why you should learn children's first names—and use them.

On dealing with other school employees:
If education support personnel stand tall and feel good about what they do, they won't have any problems with teachers. Stay open-minded, be honest, and get involved with teachers after working hours to build a school community. Finally, be a team player. Teamwork is the best work!

News You Can Use

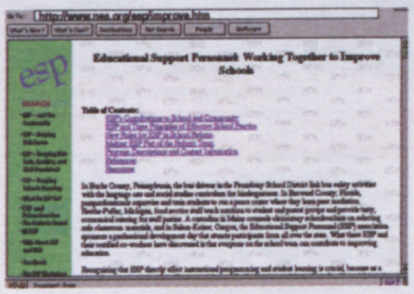
Helping Kids Learn

School Improvement

Want to know how ESP can be key players in school improvement? *Educational Support Personnel: Working Together to Improve Schools* is a good place to start looking for ideas and inspiration.

Published by the NEA ESP Program in collaboration with the NEA National Center for Innovation and Policy Studies, this book gives concrete, practical examples of how support employees are making themselves part of education reform teams around the country.

The book also provides names, addresses, and phone numbers of folks who can provide more information. For a free copy, contact the NEA ESP Program, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 202/822-7131. Or download the book from the ESP Web site at www.nea.org/esp/improve.htm.



Newsletter for Paras

New Directions, the quarterly newsletter of the National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals in Education and Related Human Services, is a great source of information and resources about employment, personnel practices, supervision, and training of paraprofessionals.

The Center, located at the Graduate School of the City University of New York, also sponsors an annual conference and publishes resource and training materials. For a subscription to *New Directions* ($10/year), contact NRC for Paraprofessionals, CASE/CUNY, 25 West 43rd St., Suite 620, New York, NY 10036, 212/642-2948. And check out the NRC on the Web at www.nea.org/esp/nrcpara.htm and at web.gc.cuny.edu/dept/case/nrcp/.

Professional Development

If your local college isn't offering the programs you want, why not offer them yourselves?

That's the attitude leaders of the Wisconsin Education Association Council took in 1994, when they launched the WEAC Professional Development Academy to provide ESP members with professional training and certification.

Academy Directory Debra Berndt reports that more than 2,300 Wisconsin ESP are currently working toward their ESP Level 1 Certificate.

To earn a Level 1 Certificate, employees must earn credits in each of four core areas—communications in the workplace, behavior management strategies, human growth and development, and rights and responsibilities under state and federal law.

Then they must earn additional credits in elective areas applicable to their job categories.

Meanwhile, a Level 2 Certificate program is being developed, and WEAC is assisting other states in creating their own Association-run statewide ESP certification programs.

For more information, contact Debra Berndt at WEAC, P.O. Box 8003, Madison, WI 53708, 608/276-7711, ext. 294.

Technology & Learning Conference

Are support employees the technology leaders in your school district?

At this year's national Technology & Learning Conference, Daryl Roland, an ESP member from Abington Junior High School in Pennsylvania, will present a workshop about her experience as a technology mentor to students and teachers alike.

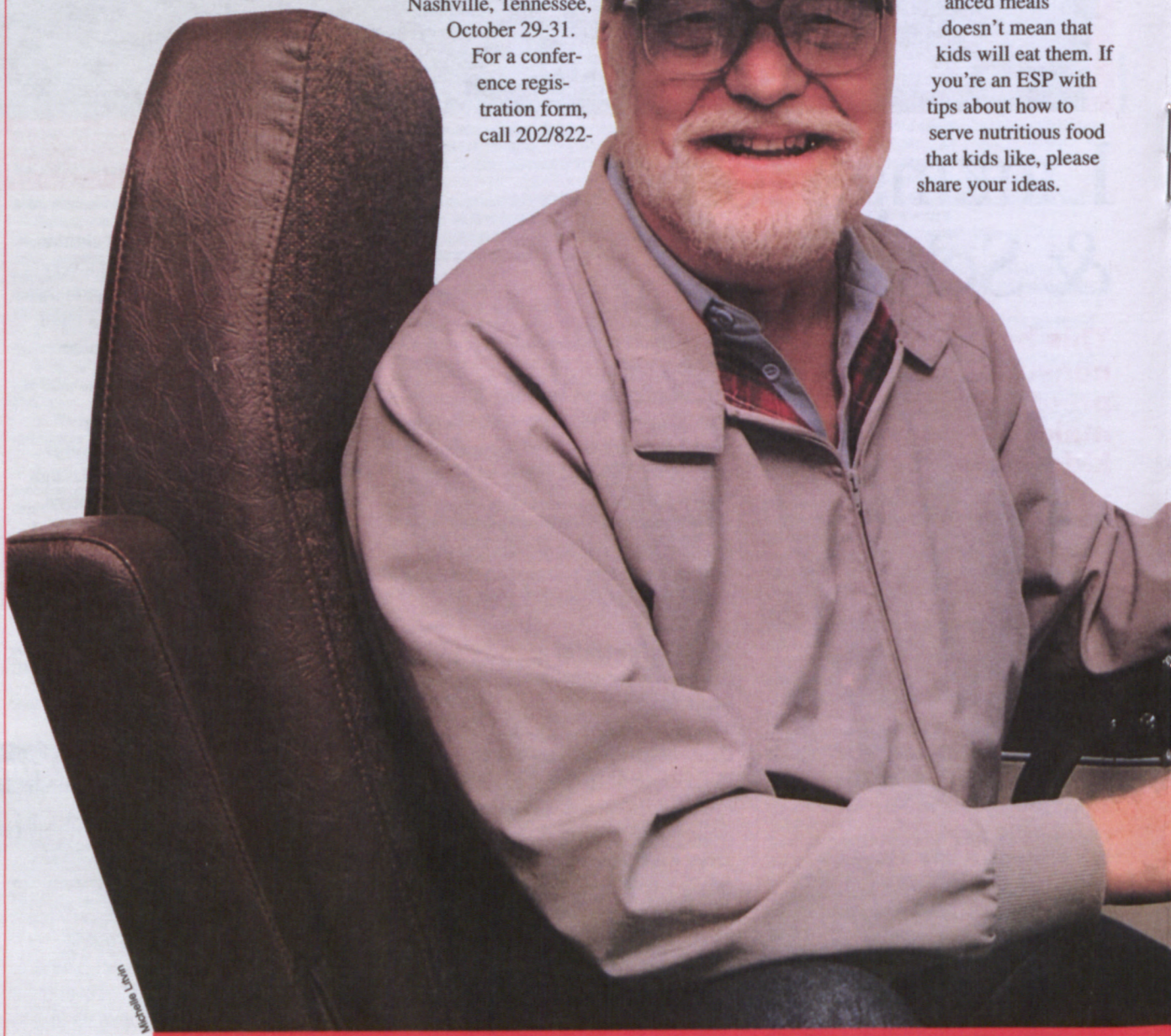
The T&L Conference, co-sponsored by NEA and 25 other educational organizations, will be held in Nashville, Tennessee, October 29-31. For a conference registration form, call 202/822-7752. For more information, call 703/531-2224 for a Fax-on-demand, or check on the Web at www.nea.org/cet/nsba.

Got Answers?

ESP Extra hopes to make it easy for the experts—you—to help one another learn some of the secrets of the trade. So, got answers to these questions?

■ *What techniques do you use to make working with parents, teachers, and other education employees easier and more effective?* Managing these relationships is an essential but little understood aspect of ESP jobs. Do you have an approach that works well for you?

■ *How do you get kids to eat well?* As any parent knows, just because you've prepared healthy, well-balanced meals doesn't mean that kids will eat them. If you're an ESP with tips about how to serve nutritious food that kids like, please share your ideas.



Michelle Levin

Driven by a lack of information for school bus drivers, NEA member Frank Hyden created his own Web site. Check it out at http://user.mc.net/hyden/.

■ *Do you work around asbestos?* Do you handle paints, solvents, pesticides, and other potentially dangerous substances? *NEA Today* would like to know how your school district ensures that ESP are properly trained in the safe and legal handling of hazardous materials, particularly when Association members are involved in designing and delivering training.

ESP Extra will print some of the best responses in a future issue. To send in your ideas, write to ESP Feedback, NEA Publishing, 1201 16th St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036 or send E-mail to ESPInput@list.nea.org.

Keeping Kids Healthy, Safe, and Well-Nourished

Answers in Cyberspace

The question of whether seat belts should be required for students on school buses was recently a hot topic on NEA's electronic mailing list for members and staff. The overwhelming sentiment: seat belts create more safety problems than they solve.

The ESP list, which now numbers nearly 250 participants, is a way to exchange information and opinions about ESP issues—like seat belts, or how to get respect on the job, or how to maintain an effective Association.

To subscribe to this free service, send an E-mail to **lyris@list.nea.org**, leave the subject line blank, and put **subscribe ESP** in the body of the message. For more information, go to www.nea.org/esp/esplist.htm.

America's school food service workers serve breakfast to 6.5 million students and lunch to 26.1 million.

Kids and Health Care

More and more children with serious health problems are attending school, and it's usually ESP who are their front-line caregivers .

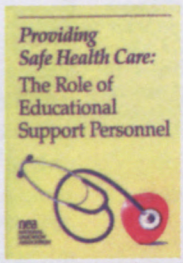
Providing Safe Health Care: The Role of Educational Support Personnel aims to help ESP understand their responsibilities as care providers, and explain how to help ensure the health and safety of students with special health needs, how to get proper training and supervision, and how the Association can help.

The publication is available on the Web at www.nea.org/esp/safecare.htm. Print copies are $4.95 plus $2.50 s&h (special NEA member price). To order, call the NEA Professional Library at 800/229-4200. Stock #1876-1-00-C8.

Food Service Resource

School nutrition is a huge industry. There are 6.5 million students participating in school breakfast programs in 65,000 schools, while 26.1 million students are served lunches in 94,000 schools.

These statistics come from the American School Food Service Association, whose 60,000 members include food service directors, managers, and others involved in school food service and nutrition programs. In addition to being a source of food service information, ASFSA provides training leading to certification of its members.



For more information, contact ASFSA, 1600 Duke St., 7th floor, Alexandria, VA 22314-3436, 703/739-3900, or visit the Web at www.asfsa.org/.

Keeping Schools Running

Office Professionals

Interested in furthering your skills as a school clerical worker? The National Association of Educational Office Professionals conducts an annual conference and offers certificates to its members at a variety of levels, based on completion of an NAEOP-approved professional development program. For more information, contact the National Association of Educational Office Professionals, P.O. Box 12619, Wichita, KS 67277-2619, 316/942-4822. On the Web: http://naeop.org.

Indoor Air Quality

Older buildings, lack of money for maintenance, and overcrowding all contribute to serious air quality problems in schools. At 446 pages, NEA's *Healthy School Handbook* is a comprehensive and readable resource on the indoor environmental issues that contribute to "sick building syndrome."

The handbook includes practical advice on how to recognize, correct, and prevent indoor air quality problems. NEA member price: $21.95 plus $5 s&h. Call the NEA Professional Library at 800/229-4200. Ask for stock #1863-X-00-C8.

Rules and Regulations

Want to know what the license requirements are to operate a school boiler in Maine, or the training you'll need to be a bus driver in Kentucky?

ESP: A Quality Workforce, published by NEA's ESP Program and National Center for Innovation, compiles all the state and federal licensing, certification and training requirements for each of the nine major ESP job categories.

Single copies are free from the NEA ESP Program, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 202/822-7131.

Custodial Workloads

In an effort to reduce costs, many school districts are reducing the number of custodians they employ and increasing custodial workloads.

It sounds like a way to save money, but is it really? What is an appropriate workload, one that keeps costs down while ensuring the health and safety of students and employees, and providing proper maintenance of buildings and equipment?

Vermont-NEA UniServ Director Phil Becker has been compiling information on this issue from around the country. For details, contact Becker at Vermont-NEA, P.O. Box 567, Montpelier, VT 05602-3737, 802/223-6375. E-mail: PBecker@nea.org.

Driving that Superhighway

A few years ago, school bus driver Frank Hyden couldn't find much good information for bus drivers. But Hyden, a founding member of the Illinois Education Association/NEA-affiliated Crystal Lake Transportation Local, didn't let that stop him.

Hyden created the School Bus Driver Web site, assembling content, writing text, and even creating his own animated graphics.

The School Bus Driver site now contains resources for drivers across the country, including sections on state laws, railroad crossings, a discussion forum for bus driver issues, and even a "Bus Driver Poetry" section.

Hyden now spends several evenings a week maintaining and updating his Web site. His advice to other ESP who want to create something on the Web: "Make a page, no matter how it looks. You've just got to get started and do it."

See it for yourself at http://user.mc.net/hyden/.

Extra Special People

Sherry Hecox (below), a bus driver in the Reeths-Puffer District, Michigan, had every kid on her bus reading and sharing stories on Read Across America Day, March 2.

Irma Valdespino, a bilingual educational assistant in Las Cruces, New Mexico, helped a Mexican migrant student in the 1980s, who then went on to become an assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Alejandro Lugo returned to show Valdespino his degree and now always visits when he's back in town

When **Delores Murray,** an instructional assistant in Richmond, Virginia, talked to a young boy with his head on the table, she saw some potential. "I know everything in class," the boy told Murray. "I'm not a dummy. I want to be a singer." Says Murray: "I was a jazz singer myself and noticed how this boy rapped every song he heard on TV. I will sponsor him in karate class and tell his mother she needs to get him there every week. I'll call the Boys and Girls Club to make sure he's there."

Phyllis Seward and her colleagues in Baltimore County, Maryland, participate in their NEA state affiliate's program of museum partnerships. "We bring 15 children to museums around the state," Seward reports. "One of their assignments afterwards is to write or draw pictures. We also participated in Read Across America and now make it a monthly thing."

Joanne Caprari, a secretary in Johnson City, New York, sees many poor kids in her elementary school who don't get much for Christmas. On her computer, Caprari wrote a letter to local businesses and churches asking for donations of cash or goods.

The appeal yielded more than $1,000—spent on a wrapped gift, a coloring book, and crayons for each student—plus church donations for the neediest.

Caprari also talked her husband into being Santa Claus at an assembly. "You never saw such happy faces," says Caprari. "My husband, a retired firefighter, danced in the gym with the children. It was a great feeling to know you could do something for these poor children." A full-time social worker in school has taken over this project.

Bill Abair, a school security specialist in Southfield, Michigan, chairs the Goodfellows holiday-giving program in nearby River Rouge. The Goodfellows deliver gifts of toys and clothing to some 600 kids and their families in this area, using police cars, fire engines, and public trucks. "You go into the homes, and you see some of the poverty firsthand," observes Abair. "But you also see how much the kids and families appreciate what we're doing for them. It's a good feeling."

Elizabeth Hill, who works in a teenage parent program in Louisville, Kentucky, reports: "Each fall, just before the holidays, the staff raises funds for our students. The day before Christmas break, students can spend points at the store on necessary items for their children."

Staff generosity doesn't stop there. When a student won a speaking contest, "the whole school helped her get a new outfit for her trip to the finals," says Hill. "We work as a team. Some days I might be washing dishes, some days I might be rocking babies."

Frances (Ann) Larson, a computer associate in the West Delaware School District, Iowa, goes the extra mile in her elementary computer lab to help students and teachers. She keeps the lab open during recess and parent-teacher conferences, spends her evenings ordering new software and reading up on technology, and gets students involved in the Accelerated Reading Program.

Want to recognize an ESP member doing quality work with kids in your school or community? Send all the details, along with that individual's name, job title, and town or school district—plus your name and phone number—to ESPInput@list.nea.org or Fax to *ESP Extra* at 202/822-7206.

Phyllis Seward

Challenge of the Month

How Do You Get a Kid To Smile?

"I greet all the children by name the moment they walk in the door. That big hug you give can always get a smile."

—Pat Losak, first grade paraprofessional, Martin Luther King Magnet Elementary, Little Rock, Arkansas

"If I don't greet kids in the hall, they will greet me anyway. They say, 'Hello, Ms. Chavira.' I always treat them with respect. I ask them, 'How was your evening?' I communicate with them."

—Lillian Chavira, educational assistant, Las Cruces, New Mexico

"What makes kids smile is when I smile first or when I recognize their achievements. I'm affirming, pushing them."

—Irma Valdespino, bilingual educational assistant, Mayfield High School, Las Cruces, New Mexico

"As a liaison between community college students and the administration, I get young people to smile by encouraging them to get to class and apply themselves. When they freak over their grades, I encourage them to attend class and make good grades."

—Sue Kyle, student activity director, Madisonville (Kentucky) Community College

"It takes more muscles to frown than to smile. When you smile, the world smiles back at you. When you frown, you frown alone."

—Leola Scoggins, CBI teacher assistant (disabilities), McClellan Magnet School (10-12), Little Rock, Arkansas

"I'm a Vietnam-era veteran. On my wall are military and martial arts certificates and education credentials, and above is a sign that says, 'Get to Know Me First.'"

—Sandra Rice, computer lab technician, Henderson Junior High School, Little Rock, Arkansas

"When I see kids in the hallway, I say they look pretty or nice."

—Walter Kirk, head custodian, Fayette County, Kentucky

"If elementary kids think you like them, they will be responsive to you. Put a smile on your face, and, if the kids want a hug, give 'em one. They'll think you care. Many of them don't get physical contact at home. If a kid hugs you, how can you help not hugging him back? They still want that physical touch.

"Show them you care and it will affect them. Tell them you care. Say, 'Have a good day, see you this afternoon,' and they'll be ready to sit down and learn. Ninety-nine percent of our district's drivers have a good rapport with kids. These kids will do better in school than they would otherwise."

—Sandy Hawkins, bus driver and president of Pulaski (Arkansas) Association of Support Staff

"I tell my kids I will do something special for them, like take them to the circus or bowling. It usually doesn't take much to make them smile."

—Peggy Wilcox, special ed assistant, Whitesburg High School, Letcher County, Kentucky

"When kids ask if we're having school tomorrow, I say, 'No, we're not.' That usually makes them laugh."

—Linda Hibbs, school receptionist, Madisonville, Kentucky

"I smile at students and say hi first. If they're little kids, I pretend to lift them by their ears. Better not print that."

—Julie McFaul, special ed assistant, College Park Elementary, Greendale, Wisconsin

Got an Answer?

How do you encourage a quiet student to overcome shyness? Send your reply, along with your name, job title, and town or school district to ESPInput@list.nea.org or Fax it to ESP Extra at 202/822-7206.

tools for diagnosing student and institutional needs, improving instruction and counseling services, and designing long-range plans. The Association believes that such student assessment programs in higher education should —

a. Be designed institutionally rather than by the state

b. Be planned, designed, implemented, and evaluated by faculty

c. Be implemented in accordance with collective bargaining contracts where such contracts exist

d. Be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the cultural, economic, and linguistic diversity among students

e. Provide tests appropriate for students with identified learning disabilities

f. Provide faculty with information to improve individual student learning styles and aptitude.

The Association supports student assessment programs in higher education only if —

a. They are accompanied by adequate funding for remedial programs and advisement

b. Remedial programs are designed and provided to meet the deficiencies identified through assessment

c. Advisement is designed and provided to link the remediation of individual students to the completion of their degree, certificates, or other appropriate courses of study.

The Association strongly opposes —

a. The use of student assessment programs to deny access to, or exclude students from, educational opportunities

b. The use of any single test to deny access to regular credit classes

c. The use of student assessment programs for the purpose of evaluating faculty, academic programs, or institutions. (95, 97)

B-55. School Libraries/Media Programs

The National Education Association believes every student must have a comprehensive library/media program within his or her educational setting. This program should include printed and nonprinted resource materials, instruction in library research and information skills, necessary technology, certificated librarians/media specialists, and educational support personnel. (80, 92)

B-56. Information Literacy

The National Education Association believes that equity must be assured as public education works to meet the critical need to prepare all students to become information-literate adults and responsible citizens.

The Association encourages federal funding specific to library/media programs, increased funding from state and local government sources, and public/private partnership funding to stimulate and support the efficient use of existing and emerging technologies and to provide for equity and freedom of access to information unimpeded by geographic, economic, social, or cultural constraints. (92, 94)

B-57. Media

The National Education Association recognizes the fact that the media have an effect on the education of the public. Therefore, the Association believes that the media have an obligation to provide full, constructive, balanced, and accurate presentations to the public. The Association supports the media's right to protect information and sources of information from mandated disclosures and search and seizure. Visual media, including the Association's, should include closed captioning for the hearing impaired and read-along captions on children's commercial and educational programs. (69, 97)

B-58. Technology in the Educational Process

The National Education Association believes that technology in the educational process improves the learning opportunities for students, improves the quality of instruction, and improves the effectiveness of educational employees. Technology can provide opportunities to reduce educational inequities.

The Association supports increased federal, state, and local resources, along with public/private partnerships, to fully fund equipment purchases/upgrades, maintenance, technical support, training, evaluation, and staffing to support the full use of technology in public schools.

The Association believes that—

a. Education employees must have access to necessary technology for managing and advancing instruction. Such technology must be compatible with and on at least the same level as technology in general use outside education. Further, education employees should be provided encouragement, time, and resources to experiment with and to research applications of technology in order to integrate technology into the curriculum.

b. Education employees, including representatives of the local association, must be involved in all aspects of technology utilization, including planning, materials selection, implementation, and evaluation. Additional preparation time and ongoing technological support must be granted to teachers using technology to enrich their regular programs. Further, classroom teachers and library/media specialists must have collaborative planning time to develop programs.

c. Teacher preparation in instructional technology, including the development of effective materials, and appropriate instructional strategies must be included in college and university programs.

d. Continuous professional development must be provided for education employees in the use, integration, and applications of technologies to enhance instruction.

e. Students must have access to and instruction in technology and the responsible use of technology. Further, there must be equity in training, funding, and participation for all students.

f. Instructional technology should be used to support instruction and must be directed by a licensed teacher.

g. IInstructional technology should be used to support instruction, but no reduction of positions, hours, or compensation should occur as a direct or indirect result of any technological programs.

h. The evaluation of education employees in any technological program should be conducted openly and meet the requirements of the local collective bargaining agreement or evaluation policy.

i. The impact of technology, telecommunications, and distance learning on education employees should be subject to local collective bargaining agreements. (81, 98)

B-59. Internet Access

The National Education Association believes that every school classroom, office, teacher workroom, and library/media center should have affordable, high-speed, seamless, and equal access to the Internet.

The Association also believes that education employees are essential to the development of an acceptable use policy and to the appropriate use of the Internet.

The Association further believes that an acceptable use policy that requires the signatures of parents/guardians/caregivers and students must be in place before allowing student access.

The Association also believes that Internet access and activities should be age appropriate and monitored and should foster critical use. Any documentation material produced as a result of Internet access should be properly cited and comply with copyright laws. (93, 98)

B-60. Interactive Distance Learning

The National Education Association believes that distance learning can create or extend learning opportunities not otherwise available to all students.

The Association also believes that courses offered by public schools utilizing live interactive distance learning should be developed and must be instructed by a licensed teacher. Receiving sites must have a qualified educational employee responsible for classroom management. Training for instructing in interactive distance learning environments is essential.

The Association further believes that class size should be determined by combining the number of students in all sites. Class size should conform to district policy of the instructing teacher and cannot exceed limits set by state statute.

In addition, the Association believes that interactive distance learning should not be used to reduce the number of teachers employed by individual school districts. (97)

B-61. Communication Between the Hearing and the Hearing Impaired

The National Education Association believes that the lack of communications between the hearing and the hearing impaired has detracted from the potential of a broadly distributed group to contribute fully to our total society.

The Association recommends that instruction be given to hearing students that will help them understand the unique needs of all hearing-impaired students and will help hearing students communicate with hearing-impaired students.

The Association further believes that the American Sign Language (ASL) should be offered as a foreign/world language elective credit at both high school and college levels. (74, 97)

B-62. Credit-Hour Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that the different methods of assigning credit hours as used by the nation's colleges and universities often cause difficulties in the evaluation of transcripts. The Association therefore urges the nation's colleges and universities to develop, in cooperation with the Association, a uniform formula to evaluate credit hours. (77, 86)

B-63. Transfer of Student Records

The National Education Association supports the development of an effective process for the transfer of student records. This process must expedite confidential informational exchanges between schools when students transfer, protect the rights of students, and facilitate the continuity of their education.

The Association believes that the school and education employees who receive students with known serious behavior problems or violence-related potential shall be immediately informed of the violence potential of those students. (80, 97)

B-64. Classroom Use of Animals

The National Education Association believes that educators at all levels should implement guidelines concerning the humane use of animals in the classroom.

The Association urges that teachers encourage compassion and respect for all living things. (89)

B-65. Home Schooling

The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience. When home schooling occurs, students enrolled must meet all state requirements. Home schooling should be limited to the children of the immediate family, with all expenses being borne by the parents. Instruction should be by persons who are licensed by the appropriate state education licensure agency, and a curriculum approved by the state department of education should be used.

The Association also believes that home-schooled students should not participate in any extracurricular activities in the public schools.

The Association further believes that local public school systems should have the authority to determine grade placement and/or credits earned toward graduation for students entering or re-entering the public school setting from a home school setting. (88, 98)

C. PROMOTE THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND/OR STUDENTS

C-1. Health Care for All Children

The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health care.

The Association also believes that such health care should be provided by properly licensed physicians and by other properly licensed health professionals.

The Association further believes that legislation should be adopted to provide comprehensive health care to all children. (90, 97)

C-2. Nutrition

The National Education Association believes that proper nutrition is essential to child development and student success. The Association further believes that proper nutrition must be a part of prenatal care and must continue throughout life.

The Association supports programs within the education framework that promote understanding of proper nutrition. In addition, the Association advocates efforts to develop uniform symbols that make clear to consumers which food choices promote good nutrition.

The Association believes school food service programs must be nutritionally sound, appealing, and affordable. The Association also supports nutrition programs that are regulated by uniform standards, readily accessible, and are supported by public funds.

The Association further believes that changes in the way public funds are allocated for school food service programs must maintain quality and appropriate levels of service as well as support additional funding, given projected increases in population and need. (90, 97)

C-3. Substance Abuse

The National Education Association opposes drug abuse, including alcohol and tobacco dependency.

The Association supports —

a. Standardization of drug laws, including the sale and distribution of drugs

b. Prohibition of the production, sale, and distribution of drug paraphernalia

c. Improvement of drug prevention and rehabilitation programs

d. Mandated drug rehabilitation programs for any violation or conviction, whether civil or criminal, resulting from the possession or use of a controlled substance

e. Research on the genetic and neurological damage done to children through parental substance abuse and the impact on student learning and behavior

f. Appropriate educational experiences to educate students about the serious consequences of participating in any aspect of the illegal drug trade.

The Association opposes the illegal use of drugs and substances and believes that severe penalties for illegal production, distribution, and sale should be strictly enforced.

The Association supports strict enforcement of the legal drinking age and the laws governing the sale of alcoholic beverages in each state and supports federal legislation to establish a uniform legal drinking age of 21.

The Association supports strict enforcement of laws governing the sale of tobacco products and believes that federal legislation should be established to create a uniform age of 18 for purchase, possession, or use of tobacco products. (72, 97)

C-4. Tobacco Products

The National Education Association believes that educators should play a key role in nationwide efforts to educate young people about the dangers of tobacco use and second-hand smoke.

The Association also believes that all governmental promotion of, subsidies for, and involvement in production and distribution of tobacco products should cease.

The Association further believes that the following changes in the law should occur:

a. All places of public accommodation should be smoke-free.

b. All advertising of tobacco products beyond packaging should be banned.

c. Taxes on tobacco products should be increased. (94)

C-5. Family Stability for Children

The National Education Association believes that it is in the best interest of all children to live in a secure and stable family environment. Every effort should be made to provide a family with the supportive services it needs to allow it to stay together and care for the child in a safe, nonabusive, and nurturing environment.

In the case of custodial and non-custodial parents, the Association recognizes the vital role both parents can play in the development of their children. The Association encourages the judicial system to recognize the crucial role both parents can play in that development when legally appropriate.

If a child's immediate family and/or extended family is unable to care for him or her, the Association believes that the child may need temporary foster care while, at the same time, efforts are made to work with the family toward reunification with the child.

The Association also believes that parents who place children in foster care must be accountable for their efforts to rehabilitate themselves and indicate, through their actions, that they are working toward the return of the child to the home.

The Association further believes that, if it becomes clear that a family is not able to make a home for a child and is unable to resume parenting, efforts should be made for the legal release of the child for adoption. (84, 96)

C-6. Dependent Children of Military Personnel

The National Education Association believes that parents serving in the military should have adequate services provided to ensure that their dependent children are cared for and an uninterrupted education is provided in the event of the parent's/parents' mobilization. (91, 96)

C-7. Child Care

The National Education Association believes that all child care centers should have adequate facilities, proper supervision, appropriate education programs, and qualified, screened, and trained personnel. Child care centers should be examined and monitored on a continuous basis, and additional legislation should be sought as necessary to maintain the highest quality child care.

The Association encourages school districts and educational institutions to establish on-site child care for preschoolers, students, the children of students, and the children of staff members. (84, 95)

C-8. Family/Domestic Violence

The National Education Association condemns any form of family/domestic violence and the tolerance thereof and believes the cycle of violence has a detrimental effect on students' well-being. School districts and communities should provide preventive training and educational programs for education employees, students, and parents/guardians. The

Association supports adequate funding and staffing of existing family services and the creation of additional support systems and shelters.

The Association also believes social services and the criminal justice system should continue to intervene actively in the cycle of family/domestic violence. (78, 97)

C-9. Standards for Family/Domestic Crisis Care

The National Education Association supports a full range of assistance from interventions to shelters for families experiencing domestic violence.

The Association advocates—

a. Services that include protection, counseling, and therapy for these children and families

b. Adequate financial support

c. Screening and training of potential foster families and shelter personnel

d. Immediate temporary foster care for children who are being abused, neglected, or exploited

e. Continued training, supervision, and evaluation of foster families and shelter personnel

f. Appropriate ongoing communications of pertinent information between social service agencies and school personnel

g. Mandated counseling for persons committing physical and/or psychological violence. (92, 95)

C-10. Child Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

The National Education Association believes that all children should be protected from the psychological and physical aspects of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The Association urges its affiliates to—

a. Seek clear legal definitions of what constitutes child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

b. Encourage the development of educator preparation courses and employee awareness programs which stress the identification of, reporting procedures for, legal responsibilities for, and techniques for dealing with abused, neglected, and exploited children

c. Cooperate with community organizations to increase public awareness and understanding of the prevalence as well as the causes, prevention, and treatment of child abuse, including neglect, exploitation, incest, and physical abuse

d. Encourage the development and use of materials to increase student awareness of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

e. Require school personnel to report to appropriate authorities instances of suspected child abuse, neglect, and exploitation while providing school personnel with immunity from legal action

f. Encourage development of legislatively funded provisions for dealing with the abusive child, adult, or institution as well as processes, protective options, and coping provisions for the abused, neglected, and exploited child

g. Encourage enactment of legislation for protection of children from parents/guardians who demonstrate neglect by leaving them unattended/unsupervised

h. Encourage positive action from the marketing and media professions in eliminating exploitation, commercialization, and glamorization of physical, emotional, and sexual child abuse. (74, 98)

C-11. Out-of-Home Placement of Juveniles

The National Education Association believes that when juveniles are removed from the home by the juvenile justice system either for their own protection or for the commission of a status offense and are placed in the custody of group foster homes or other custodial facilities, the rights of both the juvenile and the community must be protected. These facilities must be licensed, be operated by trained and licensed personnel, meet appropriate health and safety codes, and provide counseling and ancillary services for the juvenile, and be nonprofit.

The impact of facilities on the public schools should be taken into account by licensing agencies and zoning authorities.

The Association further believes that the school and educators who receive students with known serious behavior problems or violence-related potential shall be immediately informed of the violence potential of those students. (92, 94)

C-12. Protection of Infants with Disabilities

The National Education Association believes that infants born with mentally and/or physically disabling conditions are entitled to receive reasonable medical care. (85, 93)

C-13. Child Support Payments

The National Education Association supports efforts of parents and local, state, and federal agencies to establish and enforce adequate child support guidelines and to improve the effectiveness of collecting court-designated child support. (83, 93)

C-14. Extremist Groups

The National Education Association condemns the philosophy and practices of extremist groups and their efforts to recruit young people and urges active opposition to all such movements that are inimical to the ideals of the Association. (80, 93)

C-15. Telephone/Telemarketing Programs

The National Education Association believes that children should be protected from exploitive telephone and telemarketing programs and that electronic blocking devices should be available at no cost. (89, 96)

C-16. School Facilities: Design, Construction, and Function

The National Education Association believes that school facilities must be conducive to teaching and learning. The physical environment must allow for a variety of needs, including the number of students, physical characteristics of students, changes in teaching methods, presentation of instruction, and an increased use of school facilities. The Association also believes that all school facilities must be well constructed, energy-efficient, aesthetically pleasing, accessible, functional, and adaptable to persons with disabilities.

The Association further believes that the community, parents, teachers, and educational support personnel must be involved through site-based, shared decision making in designing these facilities. Construction designs should incorporate original art.

The Association further believes that stable and sufficient funding must be provided for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of the school facility. (92, 98)

C-17. Safe School Environment

The National Education Association believes that all educational facilities must be smoke-free and safe from environmental and chemical hazards.

School districts should conduct periodic testing for harmful water and airborne particles/agents which are detrimental to the health of students and education employees.

The Association also believes in the establishment and enforcement of standards of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to ensure health and safety.

The Association supports ongoing training and certification of education employees who work in potentially hazardous situations. This training must include proper handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and instruction on Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).

Additional health hazards should not be created when facilities are altered or repaired.

The Association further believes that school districts must post MSDS and OSHA standards. Students and/or their guardians, school employees, and the public should be notified of actual and potential hazards. All stakeholders should be involved in developing a plan for corrective action. (89, 97)

C-18. Programs Before and After School

The National Education Association believes that all children need adequate and appropriate adult supervision and guidance before and after school hours.

The Association believes that children who have limited or no adult supervision before or after school need local, state, and/or national programs, developed and staffed by qualified and trained personnel, which include opportunities to participate in study-skill sessions, counseling, and guidance in addition to recreational activities. (83, 95)

C-19. Prevention of Child Abduction

The National Education Association believes that all children should be protected from abduction. Programs to prevent abduction should be provided to education employees, students, parents/guardians, and the community. School districts should have policies and procedures for the prevention of abduction. (84, 97)

C-20. Missing Children

The National Education Association believes that all available means must be utilized to locate missing children. The Association also believes that local and state affiliates should work cooperatively with local programs and/or authorities to raise the public's consciousness about the missing-children crisis.

The Association further believes that the voluntary fingerprinting of children should be conducted in a nonthreatening environment and that completed fingerprint cards should be given to the parent or guardian. (81, 97)

C-21. School Transportation

The National Education Association believes that free transportation should be provided for all public school students residing beyond a reasonable and safe walking distance from their assigned schools. The Association also believes that local school districts should provide students with transportation for all school-related activities.

The Association further believes in safe and orderly transportation of students. Rules, regulations, and procedures must be developed, enforced, and constantly reviewed and revised to ensure it. School bus personnel should be utilized to transport students at all times. (77, 96)

C-22. Comprehensive School Health Programs and Services

The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs and services. Such programs and services must be interactive and coordinated within and between school, home, and community settings. School and community efforts must also be integrated to promote the well-being of children and youth and to build support for school and community health programs.

The Association believes that schools should provide—

a. A healthful psychological climate and a safe physical environment

b. Food services that provide nutritious meals and support sound nutrition education that helps students to select nutritionally appropriate foods.

The Association also believes that programs in the schools should provide—

a. A planned, sequential, pre-K through 12 health education curriculum that integrates various health topics (such as drug abuse, violence, universal precautions, and HIV education); that is taught by teachers specifically prepared to teach the subject; and that enables students to develop the essential knowledge and skills to maintain personal, family, and community health

b. A planned, sequential, pre-K through 12 physical education curriculum

c. Worksite health promotion to improve the health status of school staff to set an example for desired student behaviors.

The Association believes that services in the schools should include—

a. Counseling programs that provide developmental guidance and broad-based interventions and referrals that promote the physical and psychological health of students

b. Services that identify, diagnose, and resolve learning disabilities

c. Health services provided by a licensed professional school nurse that promote the health of students through prevention, case finding, early intervention, and remediation of specific health problems, that provide first aid and triage of illness and injuries, and that provide health counseling

d. A nurse-to-student ratio at each site that is appropriate to provide quality school health care

e. Comprehensive school-based, community-funded student health care clinics that provide basic health care services (which may include diagnosis and treatment) to supplement school nurses

f. If deemed appropriate by local choice, family-planning counseling and access to birth control methods with instruction in their use

g. Coordination with community agencies for support and follow-up activities.

The Association believes that all services available to students must be provided by appropriately licensed and certificated professional personnel. The Association further believes that education employees, parents, students, and personnel from community agencies providing services to students must be involved in the development, implementation, and coordination of services.

The Association urges its affiliates to support legislation to provide comprehensive care to all children and supports community, state, and national efforts to coordinate services. (69, 98)

C-23. School Counseling Programs

The National Education Association believes that guidance and counseling programs should be integrated into the entire education system and that such programs should be provided through counselor/student ratios that best support students in realizing their full potential in all areas of growth and achievement. (87, 97)

C-24. Student Stress and Anger

The National Education Association believes that increasing mental, emotional, and environmental pressures result in drug and alcohol abuse, violence, vandalism, school dropouts, and suicide among children and youth.

The Association also believes stress and anger management programs, including follow-up support, that address the needs of children within both school and community settings, should be provided. Workshops to prepare education employees and parents/guardians are necessary to help students deal with stress and anger. (80, 96)

C-25. Effective School Climate

The National Education Association believes that an effective school climate is necessary for promoting educational excellence in public schools. An effective school has a positive environment in which education employees, students, and parents/guardians communicate with, care for, respect, and trust each other and in which the school as an institution cares for, respects, trusts, and fosters an understanding among the people in it.

The Association also believes that education employees and students should be protected from all forms of harassment. Appropriate education must be given and timely action must be taken to ensure that harassment does not recur.

The Association further believes that due process must be guaranteed to all individuals accused of harassment. (87, 97)

C-26. Discipline, Order, and Safety Required for Learning

The National Education Association believes that discipline, order, and safety are essential for an environment conducive to learning. A concerted effort among education employees, parents/guardians, students, administrators, community members, and school governing boards is necessary to achieve safe, orderly schools. The Association therefore believes that the following guidelines must be followed in the schools:

a. Students should be empowered with strategies and skills, including conflict resolution, that will develop tolerance, self-discipline, and self-control. Students should be taught to distinguish between their own rights and responsibilities and the rights and responsibilities of others.

b. An orderly environment, including infrastructure, for students and education employees must be established on the basis of rational methods and procedures to promote school activities and behaviors that enhance teaching and learning.

c. A truly safe school setting must extend beyond freedom from danger to freedom from fear of danger, which inhibits both teaching and learning as well as participation in school and community activities.

The Association further believes that all education employees should receive formal, extensive, and ongoing training in strategies that promote discipline, order, and safety in both school and school-related activities. (94, 96)

C-27. Support and Training for Parents/Guardians of Disruptive Students

The National Education Association believes that appropriate school behavior begins and is reinforced in the home. Parents/guardians of children who are disruptive often need support and training in order to reduce negative behavior and increase student learning. Programs that provide assistance and training in child development, effective parenting skills, and strategies for dealing with disruptive students should be available for parents/guardians. Schools can be instrumental in identifying and recommending strategies that can assist parents/guardians. (96)

C-28. Nonviolence in Schools

The National Education Association believes that school employees and students should be safe from physical, verbal, and psychological violence. The Association also believes that schools should provide appropriate services within the regular education program or develop appropriate alter-native education placement programs for students who are dangerous to other students and education employees.

Students must receive due process before placement in an alternative program.

The Association further believes that the appropriate agencies should use their authority to prevent violence in schools and in society. (86, 97)

C-29. Student Sexual Orientation

The National Education Association believes that all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, should be afforded equal opportunity within the public education system. The Association further believes that, for students who are struggling with their sexual/gender orientation, every school district and educational institution should provide counseling services and programs that deal with high suicide and dropout rates and the high incidence of teen prostitution. These services and programs shall be staffed by trained personnel. (88, 97)

C-30. Placement of Students with HIV/AIDS

The National Education Association supports establishing local policy that ensures a free, appropriate public education in a least-restrictive environment for all students infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

The Association believes that the placement of such students in school is a medical decision that should be made on a case-by-case basis by qualified health care professionals.

The Association further believes that students should not be refused admittance to school or subjected to any other adverse action solely because they have tested positive for HIV or have been diagnosed as having AIDS. (87, 93)

C-31. Suicide Prevention Programs

The National Education Association believes that suicide prevention programs including prevention, intervention, and postvention must be developed and implemented. The Association urges its affiliates to ensure that these programs are an integral part of the school program. (89, 92)

C-32. Youth Camp Safety

The National Education Association believes that all youth camps must provide proper supervision and instruction as well as secure facilities that meet current safety and health standards.

The Association urges its members to support legislation establishing guidelines that require that all camp personnel be qualified and trained for their areas of responsibility. (76, 87)

C-33. Student Rights and Responsibilities

The National Education Association believes that basic student rights include the right to free inquiry and expression; due process; gender equity; freedom of association; freedom of peaceful assembly and petition; participation in the governance of the school, college, and university; freedom from discrimination; freedom from commercial exploitation, including the payment of subminimum wages; and equal educational opportunity.

The Association believes that each of these rights carries with it a comparable responsibility. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living. No student has the right to interfere with the education of other students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of each person involved in the educational process.

The Association believes in the confidentiality of student information and opposes its dissemination to any organization or institution without the consent of the student and/or parent.

The Association also believes that student rights must be safeguarded when students are involved in commercial premium campaigns and fundraising activities. (69, 95)

C-34. Drug and Alcohol Testing of Students

The National Education Association believes that mandatory drug and alcohol testing of students without probable cause is an unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of privacy and opposes such testing.

The Association further believes that schools must immediately notify parents/guardians of students suspected of abusing drugs and alcohol and provide information about support services. (87, 97)

C-35. HIV/AIDS Testing of Students

The National Education Association opposes mandatory/involuntary human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) testing of students. (87, 93)

C-36. Optimizing Students' Time To Learn

The National Education Association believes that time to learn is essential in promoting optimum achieve-ment in the schools.

The Association believes that —

a. Student absences from school have adverse effects on program continuity, academic achievement, and mastery by the student. The Association urges its affiliates to work with school districts, parent groups, other appropriate community groups, and public agencies to develop programs to reduce student absences.

b. Excessive or unusual working hours are detrimental to a student's attention span and academic achievement. The child labor laws, as structured by the Fair Labor Standards Act, must be monitored, enforced, and strengthened by local, state, and national governing bodies. (79, 96)

C-37. Media, Games, and Children

The National Education Association recognizes that children are an especially vulnerable audience who must be protected from violence, prejudice, sexual content, stereotyping, and exploitation by advertisers; makers of video games, audiocassettes, board games, and toys; and other media professionals. To help children become critical users of the media, the Association encourages advertisers, media professionals, and parents to use materials of the highest caliber. To help parents become critical consumers, the Association encourages manufacturers of games and toys to make explicit to consumers, prior to purchase, the nature of product contents through specific labeling. Radio and television programmers should make these materials available to children, with consideration given to the child's age, the time of day, and the subject matter. The Association encourages advertisers and media professionals to use standard grammar and correct spelling and to refrain from the use of sexist terminology and profanity.

The Association urges its affiliates to establish media study committees to monitor media activities, to provide research materials and training for members, and to promote positive educational programming. The Association also urges the movie industry to edit movies for educational use and make them available in video format. The Association further urges its affiliates and members to help parents determine the types of programs their children should listen to or view. (69, 95)

C-38. Impact of Homelessness and Poverty on Children and Youth

The National Education Association believes that education must be provided for all children and youth and believes that poverty negatively impacts children's ability to learn and deprives them of the opportunity for academic success.

The Association believes in the right of all children and youth, including those without a permanent legal address, to an education, adequate housing, and health care.

The Association further believes that school and community groups should work cooperatively to meet the needs of homeless and impoverished children and youth. (88, 96)

C-39. Extracurricular Participation

The National Education Association believes that the successful completion of an academic program is the first priority for all students.

The Association also believes that all schools, colleges, universities, and parents/guardians must accept their educational responsibilities to student athletes and participants in other extracurricular activities. These students should not be exploited for economic and/or personal gain.

The Association further believes that there should be fair and equitable eligibility requirements for student participation and student progress should be monitored frequently. (84, 97)

C-40. Gender Equity in Athletic Programs

The National Education Association believes that at all educational levels female and male students must have equal opportunity to participate in athletic programs.

The Association urges that athletic funds for facilities, equipment, and remuneration of staff be allocated equally between female and male programs. (74, 93)

C-41. Reduction of Gang-Related Crime

The National Education Association believes that families, schools, communities, businesses, and law enforcement agencies have critical roles in reducing gang-related crime. The Association supports collaboration among these groups in an effort to reduce such crime.

The Association supports education programs that promote positive self-image and academic success — such as dropout prevention/intervention, before- and after-school programs, and job training — particularly for at-risk students in areas where there is a high degree of gang activity.

The Association also believes that the business community has an important role in reducing illegal activities by gangs. The Association supports programs that lead to meaningful job opportunities for youths.

The Association believes that law enforcement agencies should be active participants in education and employment programs to reduce gang-related crimes.

The Association further believes that federal, state, and local governments should develop and implement education and youth employment programs in helping to reduce illegal activities by gangs. (88, 94)

C-42. Juvenile Offenders

The National Education Association believes that juvenile offenders who are convicted of serious crimes and who are contained in detention centers should be provided a healthy environment conducive to positive social change.

The Association further believes that these juveniles, while in this environment, should be provided with education programs that will enable them to become contributing members of society. Teachers of these youths must be prepared to provide instruction in life skills and learning skills.

Juvenile offenders who pose a threat to the health and safety of others and who are not placed in these centers should be provided educational services in an appropriate alternative setting rather than the regular public school setting.

The Association further believes that all education employees working with a student having a record of violent behavior or severe behavioral problems should be immediately informed of the nature, extent, and duration of the student's record of violent acts/disruptive behaviors. Before student placement, these employees should also be provided with teaching strategies that may impact the student's learning style and a plan for behavior management and modification.

The Association supports the placement of juveniles who are not charged with any offense or those who are status offenders in separate facilities from those persons who are charged with criminal offenses. (88, 93)

C-43. Alcohol/Tobacco Endorsements

The National Education Association believes that individual performers and organizers of concerts and sporting events should refrain from endorsing and advertising alcohol and tobacco products. The Association supports the elimination of incongruent and secondary advertising of alcohol and tobacco products. (90, 97)

C-44. Alcohol Advertising

The National Education Association believes that alcoholic beverages and their use should not be advertised. (88, 97)

D. PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE AMONG EDUCATORS

D-1. The Teaching Profession

The National Education Association believes that the teaching profession is a cornerstone of society. The goal of the profession must be to provide the highest quality of education to all students. To achieve this goal, the profession must be composed of individuals who meet the highest standards. These standards must be established, maintained, and governed by the members of the profession and must apply to recruitment, teacher preparation, induction, professional development, evaluation, practice, and accountability. Members of the teaching profession must assume expanded leadership roles and must have the time, resources, and decision-making authority to provide the highest quality of learning for each student. This goal can be achieved by the profession in partnership with other educational employees; parents, guardians, or other caregivers; the community; the district; and the state. (98)

D-2. Teacher Preparation Programs: Recruitment

The National Education Association believes in a strong program of teacher recruitment with special emphasis on recruitment of underrepresented candidates. Preteaching programs and recruitment efforts should be developed at high schools and community/junior colleges in conjunction with institutions of higher education with teacher preparation programs. These efforts should include the active participation of practicing pre-K through 12 teachers.

The Association also believes that individuals interested in teaching as a career should attend institutions accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Counselors and advisers should inform students of the advantages of attending NCATE-accredited institutions.

Federally financed loan and grant programs should be established to encourage students to become professional educators. Progressive forgiveness of the loan should be based upon the number of years of professional service.

Grants should be secured from both public and private sources to assist students planning to pursue a career in education. (90, 98)

D-3. Teacher Preparation Programs: Admissions

The National Education Association believes that its affiliates should continue to improve standards for admission into the teaching profession by working cooperatively with teacher training institutions and their professional organizations. Further, the Association believes that the appropriate agency within each state should regularly monitor and evaluate the teacher preparation programs within the state as to content and presentation to ensure quality and continuity. Requirements for admission to college of education programs should be rigorous yet flexible enough to allow admittance to those who demonstrate potential for effective practice. Admission to any program should be based on multiple considerations, such as recommendations of faculty (liberal arts and education), grade-point average, personal interviews, portfolio reviews, and recommendations of persons in related fields, but standardized achievement test scores must not be the sole basis for admission. The selection process shall be a continuous and integral part of the candidate's educational program. Such process shall be nondiscriminatory.

The Association urges appropriate state agencies to monitor projected needs by certification areas and to inform teacher preparation institutions of those needs on a continuing basis. Teacher preparation institutions should counsel and prepare prospective teachers in numbers consistent with projected needs. (70, 95)

D-4. Teacher Preparation Programs: Affiliate Participation

The National Education Association believes that its affiliates should take immediate steps to become involved in college and university committees that control teacher education programs. To this end, the affiliates should—

a. Support inclusion of instruction in school law and in the values, ethics, responsibilities, and structure of professional teacher organizations

b. Support regulations that would place credentialed educators with teaching experience in decision-making roles in departments of education

c. Share in the responsibility for practicum experience with the public schools and the institutions that prepare teachers

d. Encourage affiliate members to promote NEA Student membership among all higher education students working in their classrooms during any part of a teacher preparation program. (70, 94)

D-5. Teacher Preparation Programs: Content and Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that a sound teacher preparation program must be equitably funded and must —

a. Involve practicing, licensed preschool through adult education teachers in the design, implementation, evaluation, and systematic change of the program

b. Involve students preparing to teach in the evaluation and improvement of the standards of the program

c. Involve teacher educators who are licensed and experienced in their instructional areas and demonstrate practical knowledge of schools and classroom teaching

d. Include a policy of affirmative recruitment

e. Include tests, reports, student teaching, portfolio reviews, and other measures of performance designed to assess progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary for effective teaching

f. Include required courses in the liberal arts, subject or grade-level specialty, reading, methodologies for the instruction of the limited English proficiency student, and professional studies that include learning theories, curriculum design, classroom management, discipline, student assessment, and teaching techniques

g. Include instruction and field experience in the uses of appropriate technology for managing and advancing instruction

h. Include instructional content and experience that address our multicultural, multiethnic diversity, recognize the contributions of ethnic and other minorities, and provide techniques for teaching culturally diverse students

i. Involve students preparing to teach in recognizing biases and acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to assist them in creating a bias-free environment

j. Include instructional content and experience in research and information skills, group processes, shared decision-making, strategic planning, the dynamics of intergroup communications, human growth and development, the changing role of the family, exceptional behaviors, and human relations

k. Include a variety of field experiences throughout the preparation program culminating in a practicum

l. Include instructional content in the areas of job contracts, salary schedules, benefit programs, and working conditions

m. Include practical instruction and experience in the processes, strategies, realities, responsibilities, and challenges of collective, shared decision-making,

problem-solving, and strategic planning

n. Include course content in awareness and educational programs of all special education areas recognized by federal law

o. Provide access to professional and preprofessional organizations related to the education profession and areas of certification. (70, 96)

D-6. Teacher Preparation Programs: Student Teaching

The National Education Association believes that student teachers should be provided with legal status and liability protection.

Higher education institutions and cooperating school systems should supply any and all instructional materials that student teachers would require during their student teaching terms. Students who are implicitly or explicitly discouraged from outside employment during their student teaching should be provided financial assistance, internship programs, or tuition waivers by the state.

Affiliates should formulate standards for school systems that receive student teachers, including guidelines for cooperating teachers and college coordination of student teachers. Supervising or cooperating teachers in a student teacher program should have reduced teaching loads and be given a minimum established compensation. Acceptance of student teachers should be on a voluntary basis.

The recommendation of the supervising or cooperating classroom teachers in such a program shall weigh heavily in the final decision regarding readiness to enter the teaching profession. Teacher preparation programs should offer alternative placements for student teachers assigned to a school in the event of a strike or other work stoppage in order to meet the requirements for a teaching license. (70, 96)

D-7. Teacher Preparation Programs: Clinical Practice

The National Education Association believes that clinical practice is essential to provide prospective teachers with the experiences necessary to enter the profession and be prepared to teach. Clinical practice contributes to enhanced student learning by fostering the development of a reflective practitioner.

The Association also believes that clinical practice should include a supervised student teaching experience/internship and a post-hiring residency of one year for a prospective teacher to achieve full licensure. Clinical practice provides formal support, instruction, and guidance by a faculty member in a teacher preparation program and by an experienced, licensed pre-K through 12 teacher in the same field of practice.

The Association further believes that prospective teachers completing clinical practice should demonstrate—

a. A comprehensive understanding of the central concepts and structure of the disciplines that they teach

b. A knowledge of how children learn, including how their approaches to learning differ

c. The ability to provide learning opportunities that support the intellectual, social, and personal development of individual students

d. A variety of instructional strategies that encourage students to develop critical thinking skills, problem-solving techniques, positive social interaction, and active engagement in learning

e. The ability to plan instructional strategies based upon knowledge of the subject matter, the students, the community, and the curriculum goals

f. The effective use of formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of individual students

g. The use of active inquiry and collaboration between and among colleagues.

The Association believes that clinical practice experiences provide opportunities to establish essential relationships with other educational employees, parents, and agencies in the community to support students' learning and well-being. (98)

D-8. Peer Assistance Programs and Peer Assistance and Review Programs

The National Education Association believes that high standards within the teaching profession and continuous improvement in professional practice are cornerstones of the profession. Some local associations may conclude that, under certain circumstances, a peer assistance or a peer assistance and review program is an appropriate mechanism for achieving these objectives.

The primary purpose of any such program should be to provide "assistance"—to improve professional practice, retain promising teachers, and build professional knowledge to improve student success. A local association may, at its option, also decide to include a "review" component in the program—involving the evaluation of performance. If a local association takes either position, the program should—

a. Be developed through collective bargaining or through a joint association/school district agreement in nonbargaining states

b. Be governed by a board composed of an equal number or a majority of representatives appointed by the local association

c. Acknowledge that the school district makes the final decision to retain or seek nonrenewal or termination, but that recommendations forwarded by the joint governing body are routinely accepted and acted upon by the district

d. Ensure that only teachers who are deemed by their peers to be highly skilled practitioners are selected for the role of consulting teacher, that the consulting teacher's area of expertise is the same as or closely related to that of the participating teacher, and that the consulting teacher is chosen by the program governing bodies

e. Seek consulting teachers who reflect the diverse population of the teaching staff

f. Provide that consulting teachers are properly compensated and provided adequate time to fulfill their responsibilities

g. Provide that consulting teachers receive extensive and ongoing training in mentoring/coaching skills, district initiatives and resources, and current education instructional methods

h. Establish guidelines for the referral of teachers as well as safeguards to prevent unwarranted referrals and to allow participating teachers the selection and/or approval of their assignment to a consulting teacher

i. Establish and convey to all consulting and participating teachers clear rules on allowable uses of documents, products, and communications arising from the program

j. Require extensive documentation based on ongoing assessments of each participant

k. Require that rigorous and extensive assistance be provided over an appropriate period of time to help the participating teacher attain the requisite standard of proficiency before any effort is made to counsel the participating teacher into alternative career choices either within or outside the education profession or a recommendation to initiate nonrenewal or termination proceedings is issued

l. Ensure due process protection and duty of fair representation procedures

m. Guarantee that participating teachers, consulting teachers, and teachers who sit on governing bodies do not lose their Association membership or bargaining unit status by virtue of their participation in the program. (97, 98)

D-9. Mentor Programs

The National Education Association believes that mentor programs are a means of enhancing the professional expertise of employees. The Association also believes that the planning, implementation, and evaluation of such programs must be negotiated or cooperatively developed and maintained by the school district and the local affiliate.

The Association further believes that the duties and responsibilities of all parties must be clearly defined and uniformly administered. Mentors must be selected through a defined process with articulated criteria, be properly trained and compensated, and be provided with adequate time to fulfill their responsibilities. The state or local authority has the obligation to provide hold-harmless protection.

The Association further believes that any documentation that results from the mentoring process must be confidential and the sole property of the person mentored, and must not be included in the participant's personnel file. (88, 97)

D-10. Administrator Preparation

The National Education Association believes that administrators and staff are partners in the total school program. Administrators must maintain valid administrator licensure and have periodic teaching experience. Areas of instructional content and experience should include participatory decision-making, interpersonal skills, personnel selection, staff evaluation, curriculum, school management techniques, and cultural diversity training. Prior to credentialing, an administrator shall have served at least five years in a full-time teaching position. (85, 94)

D-11. A Licensed Educator in Every Professional Position

The National Education Association believes that all educators must have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their duties. Each professional position, including early childhood development and other specialized and substitute positions, must be filled by an educator who has completed, in an accredited institution of higher education, course work required by his/her position and a teacher preparation program, and who holds the state license and/or appropriate state vocational license.

The Association opposes any attempts to diminish the quality of learning or services through the elimination of teaching positions, through the subcontracting of teaching and support services, through involuntary assignment out of field, or through the revision of school staff management under the guise of improving educational opportunity.

The Association also opposes the practice of requiring classroom aides, part-time employees, or licensed staff to replace absent teachers. (69, 98)

D-12. Supervision of Extracurricular Activities

The National Education Association believes that extracurricular activities are an important part of the public school experience. Education institutions should adopt policies, standards, and guidelines for staffing extracurricular activities and for hiring personnel who have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform those duties, and for providing staff members with appropriate ongoing training. Qualified education employees must be given the opportunity of first acceptance of paid positions. (94, 96)

D-13. Professional Development for Teachers and Administrators

The National Education Association believes that continuous professional development is required for teachers and administrators to achieve and maintain the highest standards of student learning and professional practice. The Association also believes that professional development should—

a. Be based upon clearly articulated goals

b. Be designed and directed by the affected professionals at each site

c. Assist teachers in meeting the needs of students

d. Be incorporated into the teaching profession as an essential component of the work schedule

e. Provide training for the implementation of new and expanded programs

f. Provide time for inquiry, research, reflection, and collaboration

g. Provide opportunities for mentoring with colleagues

h. Be standards referenced and incorporate the best principles of teaching and learning

i. Be career long, rigorous, and sustained

j. Stimulate intellectual development and leadership capacity

k. Balance individual priorities with the needs of the school and the district

l. Provide a depth of subject matter knowledge and a greater understanding of learning styles

m. Provide opportunities to apply new learnings and changes in practice

n. Provide opportunities to assume new roles, including leadership positions

o. Include an ongoing assessment and evaluation component to determine effectiveness

p. Provide flexibility for the use of a variety of resources such as university-school partnerships, professional development schools, exchange programs, professional development resource centers, and cultural and business resources. (76, 98)

D-14. Professional Development for Educational Support Personnel

The National Education Association believes that professional development should be required throughout the career of educational support personnel. Professional development programs should provide equal opportunities for these employees to gain and improve the knowledge and skills important to their position and job performance. Professional development programs should assure that appropriate education employees have a decisive voice at every stage of planning, implementation, and evaluation. (98)

D-15. Professional Development Resource Centers

The National Education Association believes that state/regional professional development resource centers provide an opportunity for education employees to share resources, experiences, and ideas for professional growth. The Association also believes that these centers should be established, funded, and accessible to all education employees. The Association further believes that members from the local associations should comprise a majority of the membership of the professional development resource center policy board. (82, 98)

D-16. Discipline, Order, and Safety

The National Education Association believes education employees should be provided management techniques on prevention and intervention strategies to assure a positive and safe educational environment.

Ongoing educational training programs in conflict prevention/conflict resolution should be provided for all education employees dealing with students' behavior before, during, and after crisis situations. (94, 96)

D-17. Neurological Disorder Awareness

The National Education Association believes in the establishment of continuing education programs that will increase education employee awareness of neurological disorders and symptoms that affect student learning. Qualified health professionals should be cooperatively involved in these programs. (87, 97)

D-18. Teacher Exchange Programs

The National Education Association believes that teachers and students benefit when teachers participate in teacher exchange programs. Voluntary teacher exchange programs should be cooperatively established with governing boards to offer such programs within and among the states, schools of federal agencies within and outside the United States, and agencies abroad. (74, 97)

D-19. Education Employee Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that formal performance-based evaluations must be augmented by formative evaluation components in order to assure the continuing competency of all education employees in their respective fields.

An effective evaluation procedure supported by well-developed, continuing professional growth programs will enable all education employees to keep abreast of developments in their areas of specialization. Such procedures, with sufficient resources, can help ensure job competency, identify deficiencies in performance, and provide options such as counseling, training programs, a remediation plan, and opportunities to observe peers.

If following such an evaluation and after being given sufficient time, training, and opportunity for improvement, a person is then formally reevaluated and incompetency can be documented, dismissal proceedings with guaranteed due process may be instituted. Such proceedings must be implemented by administrators/evaluators who are properly trained and held accountable for appropriate and fair evaluation systems.

The evaluation procedure should be cooperatively developed and maintained in conjunction with representatives selected by the local association and should include—

a. Clear performance expectations that are specific to the job description

b. Regular observation of job performance with advance notice and discussion of evaluation visits and a timely consultation after each visit

c. A written evaluation report to be provided to the person being evaluated

d. Opportunity for a written response prior to the placement of the evaluation in the personnel file

e. An employee improvement plan that will not interfere with any earned pay increase or longevity credit

f. A provision for an alternative evaluator and/or an opportunity for an alternative evaluation report to ensure a fair and unbiased evaluation of the education employee

g. An unbiased appeals process with an evidentiary hearing under oath.

The Association also believes that procedures for evaluation of administrators should include evaluations by educational employees who are directly supervised by them.

By participating in an evaluation process, an education employee shall not waive his or her right to due process in any subsequent contractual or legal proceeding. (69, 98)

D-20. Testing/Assessment and Teacher Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that competency testing must not be used as a condition of employment, license retention, evaluation, placement, ranking, or promotion of licensed teachers.

The Association opposes the use of pupil progress, standardized achievement tests, or student assessment tests for purposes of teacher evaluation. (69, 98)

D-21. Evaluation and Promotion in Higher Education

The National Education Association affirms the importance of teaching in institutions of higher education and believes, therefore, that research and publication should not be the only criteria on which higher education faculty are evaluated and/or promoted.

The Association further believes that its higher education members must be allowed to determine through the collective bargaining process the methods by which they are evaluated and promoted. (86, 98)

E. GAIN RECOGNITION OF THE BASIC IMPORTANCE OF THE TEACHER IN THE LEARNING PROCESS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES IN THE EDUCATIONAL EFFORT

E-1. Instructional Excellence

The National Education Association believes that to achieve and maintain instructional excellence there must be continual improvement in the education process. The Association also believes that teachers have the primary responsibility for instructional excellence and must have the primary authority to recommend improvements in instruction through a democratic decision-making process. The Association further believes all education employees should support high standards for instructional excellence and contribute to the continual improvement of education. The Association recommends that education employees collaborate in the research, development, and field testing of new instructional methods and materials. (69, 96)

E-2. Time To Teach

The National Education Association believes that "time to teach" refers not only to those hours during which an educator is actually teaching but also applies to those conditions that contribute to the student-teacher relationship. These include a reasonable, carefully defined work load, a duty-free lunch period, an office in which to work, access to telephones, adequate and appropriate office equipment, access to technology, freedom from interruptions during instructional time, unencumbered planning time, time to evaluate student progress, time for implementation of federal and state legislative requirements, and elimination of the noninstructional tasks required of a teacher.

The Association recognizes that accountability requires reporting on the uses of funding derived from federal, state, and local education programs. The Association believes, however, that in order for the classroom educator to spend adequate time on instructional duties, the paperwork burden on the practitioner must be reduced and held to an absolute minimum.

The Association believes that teachers need the freedom and flexibility to schedule time and design programs to meet the needs of students. (69, 94)

E-3. Selection and Challenges of Materials and Teaching Techniques

The National Education Association believes that democratic values can best be transmitted in an atmosphere that does not restrain free inquiry and learning. The Association also believes that quality teaching depends on the freedom to select materials and techniques. Teachers and librarians/media specialists must have the right to select and use materials and techniques without censorship or legislative interference.

The Association deplores prepublishing censorship, book-burning crusades, and attempts to ban books from school libraries/media centers and school curricula. Challenges to the choice of instructional materials and techniques must be orderly and objective, under procedures mutually adopted by professional associations and school governing boards.

Instructional materials and equipment must be provided in sufficient variety and quantity to serve all students. (69, 96)

E-4. Development of Materials

The National Education Association believes that public school teachers and postsecondary faculty should be involved in the development and field testing of all educational materials offered for adoption or purchase by public school districts and educational institutions. Materials in all subject areas should include strategies that encourage student interaction, be developmentally appropriate, be free of stereotypes, address divergent points of view, contain sufficient activities to teach the concepts, and provide for the evaluation of higher level thinking skills.

Where school districts and educational institutions involve teachers and faculty in the development of any educational materials, participation should be voluntary and compensated. (84, 96)

E-5. Cultural Diversity in Instructional Materials and Activities

The National Education Association believes that educational materials and activities should accurately portray cultural diversity and contributions of ethnic-minority groups. Ethnic-minority teachers must be involved in selecting educational materials and in preparing teachers in their use.

The Association recognizes that additional instructional materials chosen for classrooms and libraries may rightfully contain a number of points of view to allow students to become familiar with the attitudes and recommendations from various segments of the literary world.

The Association acknowledges that many contemporary texts related to ethnic-minority groups do not portray realistically their lifestyles but convey a negative self-concept to ethnic-minority students. The Association believes that educators and governing boards should adopt and use textbooks and other educational materials in all subject areas that accurately portray the contributions of ethnic and other minorities. (69, 95)

E-6. Women in Instructional Materials

The National Education Association believes that educational materials should accurately portray the influence, contributions, and historical lifestyles of women in our nation and throughout the world. (96, 98)

E-7. Religious Heritage in Instructional Materials

The National Education Association believes that educational materials should accurately portray the influence of religion in our nation and throughout the world. (88)

E-8. Impact of Federal and State Legislative Mandates

The National Education Association believes that federal and state mandates regarding school programs should be broad, general guidelines and should not be based on student achievement. Mandated programs should be established or eliminated only in conjunction with the Association and its state and local affiliates. Mandates should be assessed by affiliates and local stakeholders with particular attention to the impact on students, education employees, school programs, and finances. (79, 97)

E-9. Academic and Professional Freedom

The National Education Association believes that academic freedom is essential to the teaching profession. Academic freedom includes the rights of teachers and learners to explore and discuss divergent points of view. Controversial issues should be a part of the instructional program when, in the judgment of the professional staff, the issues are appropriate to the curriculum and to the maturity level of the student. A teacher shall not be fired, transferred, or removed from his or her position for refusing to suppress the free expression rights of students.

The Association also believes that professional freedom is essential to the teaching profession. Professional freedom includes the teachers' right to evaluate, criticize, and/or advocate their personal point of view concerning the policies and programs of the schools. Teachers also have the right to assist colleagues when their academic or professional freedoms are violated.

The Association further believes that legislation and regulations that mandate or permit the teaching of religious doctrines and/or groups that promote antipublic education agendas violate both student and teacher rights. The Association urges its affiliates to seek repeal of these mandates where they exist. (69, 92)

E-10. Intellectual Property Rights

The National Education Association believes that all faculty and staff should retain full ownership of and subsequent control over their intellectual property. (96)

E-11. Access to Copyrighted Materials for Educational Use

The National Education Association believes that maximum access to copyrighted materials that relate to the curriculum is in the public interest. The Association recognizes that the copyright law as revised provides for two parallel sets of rights: the rights of those who create to profit from their efforts and the rights of teachers to a limited use of those materials in teaching.

The Association insists that the public interest requires that the copyright law include an appropriate not-for-profit clause to guarantee to teachers and educational institutions use of copyrighted materials for nonprofit educational purposes. (69, 86)

E-12. Assessment of Student Learning

The National Education Association supports ongoing comprehensive assessment of student growth. A student's level of performance is best assessed with authentic measures directly linked to the lessons teachers teach and the materials teachers use.

The Association believes that the primary purposes of assessment are as follows:

a. To assist students and their parents/guardians in identifying the student's strengths and needs

b. To encourage students to become lifelong learners

c. To measure a program's effectiveness, communicate learning expectations, and provide a basis for determining instructional strategies

d. To develop appropriate learning experiences for students.

The Association believes that no one measure should be used to determine a student's performance. Teachers should utilize a variety of measures to accurately assess student growth. All methods of assessment shall be free of cultural, racial, and gender biases.

The Association also believes that classroom teachers must be involved in the development of assessment systems and are best qualified to determine the criteria for assessment of students and dissemination of results. (81, 97)

E-13. Support Personnel in the Education Process

The National Education Association believes that all education employees are essential to the learning environment. The Association recognizes that educational support personnel promote positive role models that enhance the education process. (90, 91)

F. PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYEES AND ADVANCE THEIR INTERESTS AND WELFARE

F-1. Nondiscriminatory Personnel Policies/Affirmative Action

The National Education Association believes that, except as otherwise provided below, personnel policies and practices must guarantee that no person be employed, retained, paid, dismissed, suspended, demoted, transferred, or retired because of race, color, national origin, cultural diversity, accent, religious beliefs, residence, physical disability, political activities, professional association activity, age, size, marital status, family relationship, gender, or sexual orientation.

Affirmative action plans and procedures that will encourage active recruitment and employment of ethnic minorities, women, and persons with disabilities should be developed and implemented in accordance with Association policy.†

Affirmative action plans and procedures that will encourage active recruitment and employment of men in underrepresented education categories should also be developed and implemented. It may be necessary, therefore, to give preference to men in recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion policies to overcome past discrimination. (69, 98)

F-2. Pay Equity/Comparable Worth

The National Education Association believes that all workers should be paid on the basis of the requirements, skills, and worth of their jobs and that factors such as the gender or race of the individual performing the job should never play a role in determining salary.

The Association supports all efforts to attain accurate and unbiased forms of job evaluation and to raise the pay of those jobs that are presently undervalued. The "market value" means of establishing pay cannot be the final determinant of pay scales since it too frequently reflects the race and sex bias in our society.

The Association encourages efforts by education employees and others of the work force to gain salary levels appropriate to the skill, value, responsibility, and requirements of their jobs. (82, 93)

F-3. Uniform Compensation

The National Education Association opposes any attempt to establish tiered compensation systems that place entry-level employees on a salary and/or benefits schedule that differs from that of career employees. (86)

F-4. Tax Deductions for Professional Expenses

The National Education Association believes that education employees must continue to perform and develop professionally and that expenses incurred to do so are professional and therefore must be considered as necessary and ordinary and must be uniformly deductible, as an adjustment, from gross income in the computation of federal, state, and local income taxes. Deductible expenses should include, but not be limited to, expenses incurred relating to sabbatical leaves; educational travel for maintenance and improvement of skills; an in-home office; education-related auto use; and, purchasing of teaching supplements and professional supplies, materials, and equipment. (69, 93)

F-5. Collective Bargaining Rights

The National Education Association believes that the attainment and exercise of collective bargaining rights are essential to the promotion of education employee and student needs in society. The Association demands that these rights be advocated where they are now abridged or denied and strengthened where they are now secured. (80, 93)

F-6. Collective Bargaining and Grievance Procedures

The National Education Association believes in the necessity of a public employees' federal collective bargaining law that will not weaken any state or local bargaining laws. The Association demands that federal, state, and local governing bodies bargain collectively with all public employees. The Association supports legislation that would prohibit the negotiating away of any public employee statutory benefit, right, or protection.

The Association also believes that local affiliates and governing boards must negotiate, in good faith, written master contracts. These contracts must include terms and conditions of employment and other matters of concern and include a provision for agency fee.

The Association further believes that local affiliates should determine the bargaining approach most appropriate for them. The Association supports a local's decision to use an interest-based process as an option from a wide range of models for collective bargaining and/or dispute resolution.

Grievance procedures shall be provided in the master contract with definite steps to appeal the application or interpretation of the contract. Binding arbitration shall be a part of the grievance procedure.

The Association further believes that binding arbitration and the right to strike must be an integral part of any collective bargaining process.

Coordinated bargaining by Association affiliates on a regional or statewide basis is an important component of collective bargaining.

The Association believes that state affiliates should seek statutory penalties for governing boards that do not bargain in good faith. Further, state affiliates should seek statutory penalties for governing bodies that seek to rescind negotiated agreements by declarations of bankruptcy or by any other means. (69, 98)

F-7. Strikes

The National Education Association denounces the practice of keeping schools open during a strike. The Association believes that when a picket line is established by the authorized bargaining unit, crossing it is strikebreaking and jeopardizes the welfare of school employees and the educational process.

The Association also believes that the chances of reaching voluntary agreement in good faith are reduced when one party to the negotiation process possesses the power to use the courts unilaterally against the other party.

The Association recommends that several procedures be used in resolution of impasse—such as mediation, fact finding, binding arbitration, political action, and strike—if conditions make it impossible to provide quality education. In the event of a strike by school employees, extracurricular and cocurricular activities must cease.

Appropriate teacher training institutions should be notified that a strike is being conducted and urged not to cooperate in emergency licensing or placement practices that constitute strikebreaking. The Association condemns denial of credits to students working in the school for credit as part of a teacher preparation or credential program who have honored a work stoppage.

The Association condemns the use of ex parte injunction, jailing, setting of excessive bail, fines, firing of members, community service in lieu of other penalties, decertification of an organization as the bargaining agent, loss of association rights, and revocation or suspension of tenure, licensure, and retirement benefits in school work stoppages.

The Association urges enactment and enforcement of statutes guaranteeing the rights of school employees when a work stoppage occurs, including the right to present their case to the state or courts, before back-to-work orders are issued.

The Association further urges its affiliates to establish practices and procedures to supply financial and emotional support as well as external and internal publicity for any local engaged in a strike. (69, 94)

F-8. Basic Contract Standards

The National Education Association believes that

†See the 1998-99 NEA Handbook for the policy statement regarding the *Use of Affirmative Action for Ethnic-Minorities and Women in Educational Employment*, adopted by the 1997 Representative Assembly.

collective bargaining agreements between education employees and their employers should contain certain standard contractual concepts. Therefore, the Association urges its affiliates to negotiate agreements that include —

a. A grievance procedure that terminates with final and binding arbitration

b. Just cause for any disciplinary action with guaranteed due process through final and binding arbitration and continuation of all employee rights, including full compensation and job security

c. A seniority list that is updated, published, and distributed annually

d. Layoff and recall based only on seniority as bargaining unit members, licensure/certification, and, to the extent legally permissible, affirmative action†

e. Employer-paid fringe benefits, including but not limited to comprehensive health, life, dental, vision, and income protection insurance and employee assistance programs, that fully cover bargaining unit members, domestic partners, and their families

f. Membership in the association or the payment of a fair-share fee as a condition of employment

g. Required posting of all vacant or newly created positions along with the right of bargaining unit members to apply for these positions

h. Unassigned preparation, planning, and travel time as applicable for all members of the bargaining unit

i. Specified class size, teaching load, and job description

j. A duty-free lunch period of not less than 30 minutes for all members of the bargaining unit

k. Nondiscriminatory, fair, and equitable treatment of bargaining unit members

l. Contractually defined procedures for evaluation and promotion

m. Released time for association business with full pay and fringe benefits

n. Parental/child rearing leave for employees to provide care for natural or adopted children

o. Contractually defined procedures for ensuring education employee decision-making in curriculum design and related instructional management and reporting systems

p. Salary schedules based upon preparation, professional growth, and length of service and excluding any form of merit pay except in institutions of higher education where it has been bargained

q. Extracurricular and extra-duty assignments filled on a voluntary basis and compensated at no less than the employee's regular rate of pay

r. Protection from being required to participate in community service

s. Retirement benefits based on all income derived from school employment, including extracurricular and extra-duty pay

t. Clearly defined bargaining unit membership

u. Placement on the salary schedule based on qualifications and number of years of experience in the profession

v. A guaranteed safe and healthy working environment

w. The school calendar

x. Protection from unilateral changes in terms or conditions of employment

y. Provisions to define class loads, student contact hours, and contract hours for instructors who are involved in distance learning, and to guarantee that technology and distance learning are not used to supplant employees. (89, 97)

F-9. Salaries and Benefits

The National Education Association believes that salary and benefit structures for education employees are matters for collective bargaining. The Association further believes that any proposed or legislated salary and benefit structure should not bypass or undermine the bargaining process or negotiated agreements.

The Association believes that salary schedules should —

a. Be based on preparation, academic degrees, experience, professional growth, responsibilities, and full length of service

b. Assure that initial placement and advancement on the salary schedule are nondiscriminatory

c. Be independent of national certification unless the impact of any national certificate is determined through the collective bargaining process where it exists or by agreement of the local NEA affiliates in those states where it does not exist

d. Provide and maintain structural integrity through the use of an index or percentage guide for experience increments and levels of academic preparation

e. Assure that salary paid for summer employment, continuing education programs, extended contracts, conducting employee training or workshops, and extra duty is not less than the rate for regular pay

f. Assure that salaries paid in nontraditional adult and alternative programs be on par with salaries paid in traditional programs and that any personnel serving lower socioeconomic groups not be paid less than equivalent educational professionals providing similar service to higher socioeconomic groups.

g. Provide for entry-level salaries and career earnings comparable to those of other professions and occupations with similar preparation and responsibilities and be structured to provide compensation levels that encourage classroom teachers to remain in the classroom and support personnel in the educational setting

h. Define "salary increase" to mean the exact monetary differential between the existing salary schedule and the proposed salary schedule — exclusive of incremental adjustments — and all basic benefits.

The Association believes that local affiliates can best promote the economic welfare of all education employees, regardless of source of funding, by following the salary standards developed at the state and national levels. Extra duties performed by education employees should be on a voluntary basis and should be accompanied by equitable extra-duty pay.

The Association believes that performance pay schedules, such as merit pay, are inappropriate.

The Association also believes its affiliates should seek the repeal of laws limiting maximum salaries and benefits for education employees.

The Association further believes that there should be no limit to the number of years of experience an education employee can transfer.

The Association further believes that education employees should be provided with benefits including, but not limited to —

a. Comprehensive insurance programs
   1. Health
   2. Dental
   3. Vision
   4. Hearing
   5. Life
   6. Legal
   7. Workers' compensation
   8. Long-term physical and mental disability

b. Paid leaves
   1. Sick leave, with unlimited accumulation
   2. Personal leave with unlimited accumulation
   3. Bereavement leave
   4. Parental leave, including adoption
   5. Dependent care leave
   6. Sabbatical leave
   7. Professional leave
   8. Association leave
   9. Religious leave

c. Additional remuneration
   1. Severance pay
   2. Tuition reimbursement
   3. Retirement compensation
   4. Unemployment compensation
   5. Benefit extension for laid-off employees

d. Personal assistance
   1. Personal assault protection, and in the event of assault, counseling services and leave that is not subject to sick or personal leave
   2. Employee assistance program
   3. Reimbursement for damages to or loss of personal property at work site
   4. Child care center
   5. An opportunity to participate in a cafeteria-type plan or plan authorized by Section 125 of the U.S. Federal Tax Code.

The Association believes that education employees should have equal access to all benefits, including comprehensive health, dental, and vision insurance and employee assistance programs for their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents.

The Association also believes that comprehensive health insurance, life insurance, and long-term disability insurance should be provided for education employees on official leave of absence or parental leave.

The Association further believes that provisions should be made for retirees, their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents at their option to continue in the comprehensive health, dental, and vision care program of the school district, educational system, or institution.

The Association believes that, if school districts consolidate or separate, education employees should not lose their tenure or have their salary, benefits, or seniority reduced. (69, 96)

†See the 1998-99 NEA Handbook for the policy statement regarding the *Use of Affirmative Action for Ethnic-Minorities and Women in Educational Employment*, adopted by the 1997 Representative Assembly.

F-10. Faculty Reward Structures in Higher Education

The National Education Association believes that the reward structure for an institution of higher education should reflect the mission of the institution. An institution whose mission is teaching undergraduate students should reward good teaching. An institution whose mission is community outreach should reward service. An institution whose mission is basic or applied research should reward good research. The proper balance between teaching, service, and research is contingent upon faculty and administration agreement on the institutional mission of the particular campus. (95)

F-11. Economic Welfare

The National Education Association is opposed to imposition of any controls that place public employees in an inferior economic position, the elimination of programs that guarantee social and economic justice for the American people, and any program that increases unemployment. (79, 86)

F-12. Civil Rights—Employment Protection

The National Education Association, recognizing the continuing erosion of civil rights, reaffirms its commitment to protect the rights of all education employees. The Association believes that all levels of government should monitor and enforce fair employment practice laws. The Association and its affiliates, working with federal, state, and local officials and agencies, shall work to promote enactment of and compliance with such laws and seek to include these rights in contractual agreements. (91, 96)

F-13. Continuing Employment and Fair Dismissal Practices

The National Education Association believes that security of position must be provided for all education employees through appropriate employment policies, including fair dismissal procedures. The laws and master contracts governing said procedures must afford education employees procedural and substantive due process.

The Association further believes that state laws must provide for the continuing employment and/or tenure of state and/or local education employees and that federal law must provide similar protection for education employees in federal schools. (69, 96)

F-14. Reduction in Force

The National Education Association believes that one of its basic responsibilities is job security and urges its affiliates to support legislation and/or to negotiate in master contracts criteria to be utilized should reduction in force (RIF) occur. Criteria should include seniority, objectivity, nondiscrimination, uniformity of application, and affirmative action.† Should RIF become necessary, the number of administrators, supervisors, and managers should be reduced at least in proportion to the number of other education employees being reduced. Contracts should establish recall procedures in which staff would be recalled in the reverse order in which they were laid off. Neighboring districts are encouraged to establish jointly such procedures that on a regional basis would provide priority hiring of laid-off education employees.

The Association also believes that local affiliates should—

a. Negotiate reduction in force policies that exclude performance evaluation from consideration in the RIF process

b. Work cooperatively with governing boards and community leaders to assist in rehiring, relocating, and/or providing alternative career training for laid-off education employees

c. Condemn the improper use of RIF to eliminate complete areas from comprehensive educational and pupil personnel programs.

It must be recognized that reduction of supportive staff and special staff and nonreplacement of retiring and other resigning teachers are both forms of reduction in force. (75, 97)

F-15. Mandated Retraining

The National Education Association believes that when a federal, state, or district mandate requires a school employee to be retrained, it is the responsibility of the mandating agency to provide released time for training, to compensate the employee at the employee's hourly rate of pay, and to provide for the cost of tuition, textbooks, and travel. (88, 90)

F-16. Protection of Education Employees

The National Education Association believes education employees and their students require safe schools and that federal and state legislation protecting all school employees from criminal physical attacks should be enacted.

The Association also believes that when school personnel are the victims of physical attack, verbal abuse, theft, vandalism, or harassment due to gender, sexual orientation, or other causes, they should receive the full support of their employer in pursuing legal and other remedies, as well as receiving reimbursement for their personal and property loss. Time lost due to such injuries shall not be deducted from accumulated sick leave.

The Association further believes that the local association must have the right to reflect professional concerns at a student suspension or expulsion hearing.

The Association urges its affiliates to cooperate with court systems to secure strict enforcement of law in cases involving disturbances in public schools and educational institutions. (70, 96)

F-17. Personnel Policies and Procedures

The National Education Association believes that personnel policies and procedures should be written and developed cooperatively by local associations and their local boards of education or appropriate governing bodies. The Association further believes in a cooperative review for improvement of the personnel policies and procedures. Where it exists, improvements will be made through the negotiation process. (69, 96)

F-18. Site-Based Decision Making

The National Education Association supports site-based decision-making processes that are based on contractual/formal agreements between districts and local associations. The Association believes that the scope of local site decision making should be limited only by the contractual/formal agreement. The Association further believes that such agreements must include the following elements:

a. Voluntary participation by local sites

b. A district-association structure for processing conflict resolution

c. An agreement on the scope of decision-making authority available to sites

d. Decision-making bodies composed of a majority of nonmanagement education employees with all members selected by the constituency represented

e. Compensated planning and training time for staff and governance bodies as well as additional resources necessary for successful implementation

f. Compensation and/or released time for participating staff members. (90, 94)

F-19. Faculty Governance in Higher Education

The National Education Association believes that faculty and staff in higher education should participate in the governance of their educational institutions. Higher education faculty should have primary responsibility for determining curricula, methods of instruction, and subject matter; establishing requirements for earning degrees and certificates; reviewing institutional budgets; and making recommendations on financial issues that impact academic programs.

Where appropriate, faculty and staff should participate in the selection and evaluation process and determine the status of colleagues and administrators, especially appointments, reappointments, and tenure.

The Association also believes it is the primary responsibility of faculty and staff, where appropriate, to establish procedures relative to promotions, sabbaticals, and research support.

The Association further believes that collective bargaining provides an additional method of institutional governance. Faculty and staff should determine policies and procedures to govern salary structure, pay increases, fringe benefit programs, calendar, and working conditions. (94, 97)

F-20. Job Sharing

The National Education Association supports the concept of voluntary job sharing as a means of providing a flexible employment opportunity to help meet the varying needs of school employees. The Association believes that there must be fair and equitable distribution of work between both job sharers in terms of the total number of hours of work and the work load.

The Association asserts that job sharing conditions of work must be subject to collective bargaining and that they require the following minimum conditions for successful implementation:

a. Prorated application of the salary schedule with full recognition of years of experience

b. An equitable share of all fringe benefits

c. An agency shop provision

d. The right to revert to full-time status

e. No loss of rights gained through tenure/seniority

f. Proportional credit toward seniority/retirement. (81, 92)

F-21. Misuse of Intern Programs

The National Education Association believes that intern programs should be utilized solely for the development of professional expertise and not as a

means of supplanting or reducing educational staff and/or budget. The Association further believes that interns who are employed by the school district should be included in local bargaining units. (77, 98)

F-22. Student Workers in Educational Institutions

The National Education Association recognizes the importance of providing employment opportunities for students in educational institutions. The Association deplores, however, the practice of employing students that results in the reduction of the number of permanent education employees or positions. (92, 98)

F-23. Educational Support Personnel in the Classroom

The National Education Association believes that classroom teachers should be provided with support staff to assist in the educational process. The educational support personnel should assist the classroom teacher, not displace the teacher, and should have a written job description defining their duties.

The Association opposes the use of educational support personnel to increase class size. (69, 98)

F-24. Summer School, Alternative Calendars, Extended School Day/Year, and Year-Round Schools

The National Education Association believes that local affiliates must participate fully in the design, authorization, implementation, evaluation, and continuation of summer school, alternative calendars, extended school day/year, and year-round school programs. Policies governing these programs must take into consideration the impact on the community and be in accordance with the Association's principles for professional salaries and class size. Employment in these programs must be on a voluntary basis. (75, 98)

F-25. Unemployment/Disability Compensation

The National Education Association supports the inclusion of educators in unemployment and disability compensation legislation at the state and federal levels. (72, 86)

F-26. Subcontracting/Contracting Out

The National Education Association opposes subcontracting/contracting out in all public school districts and educational institutions. The Association further believes that school districts and educational institutions should not enter into subcontracting agreements that transfer or displace education employees, that replace full-time positions with temporary, part-time or volunteer workers or that abrogate previously contracted benefits, reduce compensation, deny fringe benefits, and/or reduce or eliminate accumulated retirement experience and benefits.

Where subcontracting exists, the Association believes that all personnel who are employed through the subcontractor to work in the school district or educational institution must meet the highest standards of accountability. The subcontractor must conduct background checks prior to an employee's being allowed to work in the school district or educational institution, and submit validation of its findings to the school district or educational institution and provide continuing evaluation and supervision of these employees working in the school district or educational institution. The Association insists that such criminal background checks must provide that —

a. Information collected will not be released to boards of education in a form other than a statement of qualification but be kept by the investigating state or national agency

b. Every employee or potential employee has a right to due process and access to records

c. Clear, specific, observable, and objective evidence of rehabilitation for past offenses is included

d. Any fee for background checks shall not be borne by the employee or potential employee. (77, 97)

F-27. Right to Privacy

The National Education Association believes that education employees should be guaranteed rights of privacy. These rights must include —

a. Access to materials in personnel files, which includes being provided a list of all records maintained by an educational institution, being able to inspect and review such records, and obtaining copies of records, explanations, and interpretations of such records, and a record of past accesses

b. Notification in writing within 10 working days of any placement of materials in an individual's file

c. Access to records and opportunity to respond to any record and to challenge records through formal or informal hearings

d. Provision to consent to or deny release of such records, including the right to receive copies of released materials and to purge inaccurate, misleading, and distorted materials

e. Notification and enforcement of these rights by educational institutions

f. A guarantee that only one personnel file per employee exists

g. Confidentiality of medical records

h. Freedom from fingerprinting as a condition of continued employment

i. Refusal of any type of polygraph or lie detector test. (75, 94)

F-28. Privileged Communications

The National Education Association believes that communications between all education employees and students must be legally privileged. The Association further believes that communication between administrators and other education employees must be kept private without the consent of the affected employee. The Association urges its affiliates to aid in seeking legislation that provides this privilege and protects both education employees and students. (74, 96)

F-29. Recording Devices in Schools

The National Education Association insists that the recording or electronic surveillance of any education employee without that person's prior written permission must be prohibited. Any subsequent use of a recording or information obtained by electronic surveillance must have the education employee's prior written permission. (74, 97)

F-30. Protection of Education Employee Advocates

The National Education Association believes in the fundamental right of all education employees to organize in their own self-interest and to speak out in defense of education employees, students, and parents without fear of reprisal.

The Association condemns those governing boards, administrators, and public officials who attempt to fire, demote, transfer, or give punitive assignments to education employees for their leadership in education employee organizations or their forthrightness in questioning apparent violations of their terms of employment. Such actions are an affront to the dignity of all education employees and a desecration of the principles of a democratic education system.

The Association also believes that school administrators, governing boards, and other public officials should respect the dignity of education personnel and reaffirm the rights of citizens to organize through representatives of their own choosing as well as their rights to exercise all other constitutional guarantees.

The Association further believes that an education employee who is required to appear in court in his/her role as an advocate should be provided release time without penalty.

The Association insists that local governing boards and administrators respect the right of Association members to use school property — such as message boxes and meeting rooms — for communication without censorship, prior restraint, or other interference.

The Association shall pursue every recourse to achieve redress of wrongs done to education employees and work for guarantees assuring education employees that reasonable pursuit of their representational responsibilities will cause them neither intimidation, harassment, nor loss of employment. (76, 96)

F-31. Protection of Education Employees from Age Harassment

The National Education Association believes that education employees should be protected from harassment because of age. The Association encourages its affiliates to work with local school districts and institutions of higher education to—

a. Establish strong policies that grant those at or approaching retirement age freedom in their options to continue education employment or to retire

b. Develop educational programs to help individuals recognize, understand, prevent, and combat harassment because of age

c. Develop and publicize a grievance procedure that encourages the reporting of incidents of harassment because of age, resolves complaints promptly, and protects the rights of all parties. (89, 97)

F-32. Employee Rights Pending Court Action

The National Education Association believes that when criminal charges or civil lawsuits are filed against a school employee, the right of due process must be guaranteed. If an employee is removed from student contact or suspended from a position due to pending court action, all employment rights of the employee shall remain in force, including full compensation and job security. Contract provisions should provide procedures to be followed until final disposition of the case. (84, 97)

F-33. Allegations Against Education Employees

The National Education Association believes education employees should be protected from allegations of child abuse made in bad faith.

Any such allegation should be investigated and resolved immediately. The name of the employee should not be publicly revealed until and unless there is a finding of guilt.

Counseling from an outside community agency should be provided for any education employee accused of child abuse, with emphasis upon the fact that such referral does not presume guilt. Additional counseling should be available for the innocent employee after the case is decided.

The Association also believes in procedural and substantive due process for education employees accused of child abuse including a mechanism whereby false or unfounded accusations can be expunged from all records, and supports restoration of job status and all rights and benefits to education employees who are acquitted of child abuse charges. The Association further believes all members should be knowledgeable of current practices in dealing with such allegations. (89, 96)

F-34. Health Examinations

The National Education Association opposes the imposition of physical and mental examinations by governing boards for the purpose of harassment of education employees.

Physical and mental examinations of education employees should be required only when there is probable cause. Results of such examinations shall be subject to medical confidentiality, and the education employee shall be informed of all results.

The Association believes that health-related information must not be released without the written consent of the employee. The employee must have the right to examine and, if needed, correct his/her medical records.

The Association believes that the cost of any required physical or mental diagnostic procedure should be incurred by the agency that requires such procedure and that education employees should be guaranteed the right to select their own physician. (77, 95)

F-35. Drug and Alcohol Testing

The National Education Association believes in a drug- and alcohol-free workplace. However, the Association believes that mandatory and/or random drug and alcohol testing of employees and job applicants is an unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of privacy and opposes such testing. (87, 94)

F-36. HIV/AIDS Testing of Education Employees

The National Education Association opposes mandatory/involuntary human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) testing of education employees or education employment applicants. (87, 93)

F-37. Employees with HIV/AIDS

The National Education Association believes that education employees shall not be fired, nonrenewed, suspended (with or without pay), transferred, or subjected to any other adverse employment action solely because they have tested positive for the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) antibody or have been diagnosed as having HIV/AIDS. (87, 93)

F-38. Hepatitis B Vaccination

The National Education Association believes that governing boards should provide free hepatitis B vaccinations to all employees choosing to be or required to be vaccinated. (95)

F-39. Catastrophic Illness Support Programs

The National Education Association supports cancer awareness programs. The Association further supports programs designed to help those coping with cancer and other catastrophic illnesses. The Association encourages its members to avail themselves of such programs. (95)

F-40. Stress Management and Wellness Programs

The National Education Association believes that adverse and stressful classroom and school conditions have led to increased emotional and physical disabilities among education employees. The Association supports stress management and wellness programs that facilitate the recognition, prevention, and treatment of stress-related problems. Such programs should ensure confidentiality and treatment without personal jeopardy.

The Association further urges that the harmful effects of stress on education employees be recognized and demands procedures that will ensure confidentiality and treatment without personal jeopardy.

The Association supports employee assistance programs (EAPs) as a voluntary resource that would assist education employees who are experiencing significant professional or personal problems by providing confidential, professional counseling leading to improved health and job effectiveness. (79, 97)

F-41. Medication and Medical Services in Schools

The National Education Association believes that procedures should be established for students who must use prescribed medication or who need other medical services during school hours. Procedures should provide that—

a. Only medical personnel be required to administer such medication or perform such medical services

b. A physician's written verification of the student's need for medication or services be required

c. Written permission of the parent or guardian be required

d. The initial dosage of medication not be given in the school except in life-threatening situations. Initial dosage is the first dosage administered from the prescription

e. Each medication given be recorded on a medication log that includes date, time, and signature of the person giving the medication

f. Medication be delivered in and dispensed from a container properly labeled with the name and strength of medication, name of patient, name of physician, date of the original prescription, and directions for use

g. Proper storage for the medication be available.

The Association also believes that school personnel should be protected from all liability when the adopted procedure is followed. In addition, school personnel have the right to refuse without fear of disciplinary repercussions to administer medication and/or medical services for which school personnel feel unqualified or when proper equipment has not been provided. Medical personnel must be provided additional training by the district prior to performing the medical services in question. (77, 97)

F-42. School Nurses

The National Education Association urges its affiliates to enroll school nurses in active membership and to seek legislation that provides licensure/certification and inclusion in collective bargaining agreements.

The Association believes that professional development programs should be available to all licensed/certified school nurses to augment their skills in delivering health care services. The Association further urges special programs for those school nurses who deal with students with disabilities. (80, 97)

F-43. Save Harmless/Education Employee Liability

The National Education Association believes that educational institutions should—

a. Provide legal liability protection for education employees when their duties include physical assistance to students with temporary and/or permanent disabilities

b. Pay all costs—including attorneys' fees, expenses, and damages—incurred by employees and other agents in defending any civil action arising out of acts or omissions occurring during the performance of their duties

c. Reimburse employees and other agents for all costs incurred in defending any criminal action arising out of acts or omissions occurring during the performance of their duties, provided that said action terminates in favor of the accused.

The Association recommends that educational institutions attempt to secure appropriate insurance to provide the aforesaid payment and reimbursement. (76, 98)

F-44. Transportation Liability Insurance

The National Education Association urges its affiliates to seek the enactment of state and local legislation that would require school systems and educational institutions to provide and to incur the expense of transportation liability insurance for education employees who are requested or required to transport students by private vehicle for any school-related function. (78, 95)

F-45. Misuse of Part-Time or Temporary Education Employees

The National Education Association believes that the increased use and/or abuse of part-time education employees threatens the academic integrity of the institution.

The Association also believes that part-time education employees should be employed only when an educational program requires specialized training or expertise not available among full-time education employees and when the need for such training and expertise warrants less than full-time employment.

The Association further believes that part-time

education employees should receive the same salary and benefits as full-time education employees at least prorated according to workload. Part-time education employees should have the same opportunities to participate in collective bargaining, training, service on committees, and setting the academic direction of the educational institution.

The Association deplores the practice of employing part-time or temporary employees for the purpose of reducing institutional budgets, reducing the number of full-time education employee positions, or avoiding the maintenance of an increase in the number of tenure track positions. (76, 98)

F-46. Volunteers in Public Schools

The National Education Association believes that parents and other community volunteers have a valuable role to play within the public schools. The proper use of volunteers is essential for the preservation of quality educational programs for children. Volunteers should be appropriately screened and trained as determined by the needs of the local school system and by state statutes. The screening should be for the sole purpose of eliminating volunteers who are convicted felons, child abusers, or sex offenders. Training should include, but not be limited to, the development of age-appropriate activities and sensitivity to diversity issues.

The Association deplores the practice of using volunteer workers for the purposes of reducing instructional budgets, reducing the number of full- or part-time instructional positions, or reducing the number of full- or part-time educational support personnel positions within a local school system.

The Association also believes that teachers and support personnel should be involved in the decision-making process regarding the utilization of volunteers within local school systems. (98)

F-47. Substitute Teachers

The National Education Association believes in the importance of employing professional educators to fulfill the critical role of substitute teachers. The Association also believes that substitute teachers perform an essential function in the maintenance and continuity of daily education. The Association believes that substitute teachers must meet the same standards as any other licensed teacher within the state and supports collective bargaining rights for substitute teachers.

The Association condemns the practice of assigning substitute teachers to regular positions for an extended duration of time. Positions created by extended absence should be filled by available licensed teachers who are eligible to be placed on contractual status by the school district. The Association condemns the use of licensed teachers to substitute for personnel on extended leave without providing full pay plus basic and fringe benefits for the substituting teacher. (75, 98)

F-48. Substitute Educational Support Personnel

The National Education Association recognizes the importance of substitute educational support personnel in the maintenance and continuity of daily operations. The Association believes that an educational support substitute must meet the same standards as the employee for whom he/she substitutes.

The Association supports the right of substitute employees to organize for collective bargaining purposes. The Association also supports the practice of providing schedule pay plus basic and fringe benefits for educational support personnel substituting for permanent educational support personnel on extended leave. (92)

F-49. Educators and Active Duty Service

The National Education Association believes that an education employee whose career is interrupted by a call to active duty service by the National Guard or the reserves should be guaranteed reemployment and all benefits that would accrue if the employee had continued in a position with the school system. (75, 93)

F-50. Employment in Federal Schools

The National Education Association believes that the federal schools should adopt employment practices consistent with federal legislation and with the Association's established policies.

The Association believes that all school employees should share equal responsibilities and that equal rights, benefits, and entitlements should be accorded to all teachers who are employed in federal schools.

The Association urges the development of policies that ensure a minimum of 120 days' notification of military installation and federal school closures. The Association further urges that personnel affected by these closures be provided support by the employer during this transition period. (71, 94)

F-51. Education in Correctional and Rehabilitation Agencies

The National Education Association believes that legislative and professional support should be given to members who teach in federal, state, and local correctional and rehabilitation institutions, hospitals, and other custodial agencies. The Association supports improving the standards of instruction in these institutions. (73, 86)

F-52. Retirement

The National Education Association shall provide leadership in retirement issues and believes that state and local retirement systems and programs should include —

a. Autonomous boards of trustees, the majority of which are elected by and from the membership

b. Actuarial and investment policies that produce sound financing

c. Annual independent review and audit

d. Immediate and full vesting after not more than five years of service

e. Provisions for employee contributions to be a percentage of total compensation, not to exceed the amount contributed by employers. The employer may pay part or all of the employee contribution

f. Provisions permitting the purchase of credit earned while a member of another retirement system

g. Provisions permitting the purchase of credit for sabbatical leaves, maternity/paternity/adoption leaves, and any other approved leaves of absences

h. Normal retirement of at least 50 percent of the highest single year's rate of salary after 20 years of creditable service or at age 55 if fully vested, where actuarially sound, and with provisions that guarantee the employee with full benefits earned from all sources. Voluntary retirement should follow the same provisions

i. Disability retirement for a service-connected disability available to school employees from the first day of employment. Nonservice-connected disability retirement shall be available after five years of service. The benefit formula for disability retirement should yield benefits comparable to those of normal retirement

j. Automatic cost-of-living increases, without regard to age, to maintain purchasing power for retirees and beneficiaries

k. A joint federal-state program to provide those who have been employed in two or more states, in Overseas Dependents Schools, or in other government schools with benefits substantially the same as they would have received if they had retired after a career in one state. Affiliates are urged to support state statutes and proposed federal legislation or any program providing portability coverage

l. Full funding and equitable administration in the granting of retirement credit for military service or provision for purchasing up to five years of retirement credit for military service

m. Nondiscrimination on the basis of gender or marital status

n. Retirement credit for unused sick leave

o. All compensation, including extra-duty pay, in computing retirement benefits

p. Benefits not reduced by other sources of income, including Social Security benefits

q. Preretirement counseling

r. Retirement housing facilities that are funded from sources other than those designated for retirement benefits

s. School employees' contributions and benefits that are not subject to federal income taxation

t. Nondiscriminatory Internal Revenue Service rules and regulations

u. An annual financial statement distributed to all members

v. Tax-sheltered annuity and deferred compensation plans with a broad choice of programs available to all members. These plans should have actuarial tables that do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, or national origin

w. Provisions to purchase pension credit for any previous Department of Defense teaching service

x. Fully paid comprehensive health insurance, including reimbursement for Medicare Part B premiums, for retired education employees, their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents

y. Benefits that are free from double taxation or source taxation by states for retiree's living outside of the state where the benefits were earned

z. All retirement benefits for spouses equally available for domestic partners

aa. Benefit formulas that provide full-year credit for each school year worked and provide that credit regardless of the number of hours worked per day. (69, 97)

F-53. Social Security

The National Education Association believes that Social Security should be available to eligible education employees where desired, but should not be mandated. Contracts with Social Security should provide for supplementary plans rather than integrated or coordinated plans.

The Association supports the reform of Social Security laws to eliminate discriminatory offset provisions and discrimination based on sex, marital status, or time of retirement and to reduce the retirement age. No benefit promised or no benefit for which money has been collected should be withdrawn without adequate replacement.

The Association also believes that Social Security retirement and survivor benefits should be based upon the Social Security program and Social Security taxes. Health and disability programs should be removed from the Social Security program and financed from general tax revenues. The Association supports the goal of comprehensive health insurance for retiree's. (77, 97)

F-54. Protection of Retirement System Assets and Earned Benefits

The National Education Association believes that retirement system assets can be invested in all types of investments. Equal consideration should be given to probable income and probable safety of the capital. All retirement benefits earned by school employees should under the law be payable to such school employees. Every effort should be made to maintain or improve existing retirement benefits. No person participating in a retirement system should be forced to accept any reduction in benefits below those in force at any time during the period of membership. The retirement benefits are earned and, therefore, inviolate.

The Association is aware of incursions on retirement system assets by state and municipal governments. Such incursions involve either a misuse of assets or the failure to appropriate required funds to the system. Both practices result in increasing accrued liabilities, which reduces the financial soundness of the system and jeopardizes the security of school employee retirement benefits. The Association believes that these incursions on retirement systems can best be prevented by the passage of federal and/or state legislation.

The Association also believes that a retirement system should be exempt from federal regulations when its plan is in compliance with minimal standards prescribed by federal, state, and local statutes. (76, 86)

F-55. Management of Education Employee Retirement Assets

The National Education Association believes that the boards of retirement systems of education employees should make every effort to participate in the decision-making process of corporations in which the systems hold stock by casting votes as stockholders that benefit the interests of the retirement systems and those of the united education profession and by electing to corporate boards members and/or representatives who support public education.

The Association further believes that the boards of retirement systems should coordinate their voting in companies in which they have a mutual interest. (94)

G. SECURE PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY

G-1. State Professional Standards Boards

The National Education Association believes that the profession must govern itself. The Association also believes that each state should have a professional standards board, composed of a majority of practicing public school teachers.

Professional standards boards should have exclusive authority to license and to determine criteria for how a national certificate will be recognized for professional educators. Further, these boards should have the exclusive authority to establish the standards regarding licensure, including procedures for suspension and revocation. The Association opposes legislation that compromises the authority of state standards boards and urges the elimination of state statutes that conflict with this authority. The Association believes that these boards should apply National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards as a minimum for granting, denying, or withdrawing the approval of teacher preparation programs. (69, 95)

G-2. National Certification

The National Education Association supports voluntary national certification by which the profession grants recognition to an individual who has met qualifications specified by the profession. The Association recognizes that this function is filled by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) which is composed of a majority of practicing public school teachers.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards establishes appropriate assessment procedures by which individuals demonstrate exemplary practice in pedagogy and in subject matter areas, issues certificates to all individuals who meet NBPTS-established standards, maintains a roster of those who have been certificated, and encourages reciprocity with state professional standards boards.

The Association supports the periodic evaluation of such certification procedures to ascertain whether cultural, economic, gender, racial, or age bias is perpetuated by the requirements for certification. (87, 98)

G-3. Licensure

The National Education Association advocates rigorous state standards for entry into the teaching profession. These standards, as established by the professional standards boards, shall include high academic performance, clinical practice experiences, and passage of appropriate pedagogical and subject matter tests. Tests should be valid and unbiased and should be included as one element of comprehensive assessment for completion of a teacher preparation program as well as for licensure into the profession.

The Association asserts that a teaching license should signify that an individual entering the teaching profession is competent to teach. A teaching license must be recognized as the primary requirement for employment in every public and private school (pre-K through 12). No license should be issued unless an individual possesses the entry-level knowledge and skills required for teaching. No emergency licenses should be issued. No assignments should be permitted outside the teacher's area of licensure without appropriate concurrent retraining supported by the local district.

The Association urges the elimination of state statutes/regulations that require teachers to renew their licenses. Where such renewal continues to be required, standardized literacy and basic skills tests to determine competency should not be used.

The Association supports regulations that would put professional educators, the majority of whom are licensed and practicing public school teachers, in state licensing agencies.

The Association supports the periodic evaluation of licensure procedures to ascertain whether cultural, economic, gender, racial, or age bias is perpetuated by the requirements for licensure. (85, 98)

G-4. Accreditation in Higher Education

The National Education Association supports strong regional, state, national, and discipline-based accrediting bodies that promote and encourage faculty participation in the accrediting process. The Association believes that programs, faculties, administrations, and facilities should be reviewed to determine their ability to enhance learning opportunities for students. The Association further believes that accrediting agencies should not impose standardized curricula, assessment models, or pedagogical methods on institutions of higher education but rather should base accreditation on standards as applied to the institutional mission statement. (95, 98)

G-5. Accreditation of Teacher Preparation Institutions

The National Education Association believes that teacher education programs should be approved at two levels: at the state level through an agency such as a professional standards board and at the national level through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

The Association believes that NCATE and its governing boards must include representatives of all levels of the teaching profession as well as students preparing to teach. (69, 87)

H. UNITE EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYEES FOR EFFECTIVE CITIZENSHIP

H-1. The Education Employee as a Citizen

The National Education Association believes that every education employee has the right and obligation to be an informed and politically active citizen. The Association also believes that, as private citizens, education employees have the right to express their

personal viewpoints in public without fear of censorship or intimidation. The Association supports voter education to alert voters to voting laws and procedures and key political issues. The Association supports written governing board policies to guarantee education employees their political rights. The Association further believes that local government units should be prevented from restricting the right of education employees to run for any elective office. Provisions should be made to enable education employees to serve in public office without curtailment of annual increments, tenure, retirement, or seniority rights, or to carry out jury duty without personal financial loss.

The Association believes that it is the duty and responsibility of education employees to involve themselves in the selection, election, and reelection of qualified, committed candidates who support goals that will provide quality education. Therefore, the Association urges its members to become politically involved and to support the political action committees of the Association and its affiliates. (69, 97)

H-2. The Right to Know

The National Education Association believes that open meeting and public disclosure laws are essential to permit the monitoring of governmental actions. (72, 97)

H-3. The Right to Vote

The National Education Association believes that the principle of one-person — one-vote must apply at all levels of government, including the election of the President of the United States.

The Association recognizes the right to vote as a constitutional right guaranteed to all eligible citizens. The Association further supports the continued maintenance of the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The Association supports simplified voting and absentee provisions for all elections, uniform registration requirements without restrictive residency provisions, and voter education programs. (71, 97)

H-4. U.S. Constitutional Convention

The National Education Association believes that the U.S. Constitution safeguards freedoms fundamental to our society. The Association also believes that all proposed changes to the Constitution should be directed through the traditional congressional proposal and state ratification process rather than through the convening of a constitutional convention, which opens the Constitution to the possibility of total revision. (82, 97)

H-5. Member Involvement in Community Organizations

The National Education Association encourages its members to become involved in citizen-based community organizations and to influence those organizations to address issues of common concern to their local, state, and national education associations. (92)

H-6. Participation in Professional Associations

The National Education Association believes that every educational employee has the right and obligation to participate fully in professional associations. Policies adopted by governing boards should provide released time without loss of pay to educational employees fulfilling leadership responsibilities or attending professional meetings. Released time should be equitably provided to all educational employees, without harassment and without preference given to educational position. (86, 97)

H-7. National Health Care Policy

The National Education Association believes that affordable, comprehensive health care is the right of every resident.

The Association supports the adoption of a single-payer health care plan for all residents of the United States, its territories, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

The Association will support health care reform measures that move the United States closer to this goal and that achieve universal and comprehensive health care coverage, control costs while assuring quality, emphasize prevention of health care problems, and are financed by means that assure greater equity in the funding of that health care.

The Association also believes that until a single-payer health care plan is adopted, Congress should make no cuts in Medicare/Medicaid benefit levels or in federal funding of the Medicare/ Medicaid program. (78, 97)

H-8. Energy Programs

The National Education Association believes that a national energy policy should reflect the efficient use of energy from all sources, provide research to develop new sources of energy, stress rapid development of renewable energy sources, and promote conservation.

The Association supports ensuring the energy-efficient operation of public schools and encourages the use of new energy sources and energy-efficient design in school renovation and construction. The Association supports efforts that develop energy conservation awareness and school building energy audit programs. The Association also supports programs that investigate energy efficiency recommendations, research, and public health and safety programs for all educational levels in the schools. (77, 97)

H-9. Environmental Responsibility

The National Education Association believes that businesses and governmental agencies should be responsible for designing, producing, and using products that are reusable, recyclable, biodegradable, or disposable without contaminating the environment.

The Association encourages its affiliates and members to include these criteria in selection of products for use and to work with school systems and educational institutions in developing purchasing policies using these criteria.

The Association further believes that business and governmental agencies should dispose of waste in a manner that will have the least possible impact on the environment. (90, 95)

H-10. Historic Preservation

The National Education Association encourages the preservation of historically significant lands and structures for the purposes of preserving our nation's heritage and maintaining important historic resources for future generations. (90, 94)

H-11. Statehood for the District of Columbia

The National Education Association affirms that all citizens of the United States should enjoy the full benefits of citizenship. Accordingly, the Association supports efforts to achieve statehood for the District of Columbia.

The Association believes that the concept of fiscal autonomy is consistent with this position and that the federal payment to the District of Columbia should be based on an established formula. (69, 97)

I. PROMOTE AND PROTECT HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS

I-1. Peace and International Relations

The National Education Association recognizes the interdependence of all people. The Association believes in the ideals of peace, freedom, and human dignity based upon respect for individual and cultural diversity. The Association believes that peace is superior to war and, in this nuclear age, is basic to the survival of civilization.

The Association urges the nations of the world, through cooperative talks, to develop treaties and disarmament agreements that reduce the danger of nuclear and conventional wars so that resources may be used to improve the quality of life.

The Association supports the peaceful uses of outer space and opposes federal spending that would extend the arms race into outer space.

The Association recognizes that the United Nations (UN) can be an effective instrument for furthering world peace, supports the 1948 UN resolution relating to genocide, and promotes the rights of all people by exposing the horrors of war, racism, and genocide.

The Association supports the concept of a U.S. Institute of Peace. The Institute should be sufficiently funded to provide programs, training, and research data in developing peacemaking and conflict resolution skills as well as provide for the publication and dissemination of information in this field.

The Association further supports the development of peace and conflict resolution curricula in teacher preparation programs. (73, 96)

I-2. Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts

The National Education Association urges the nations of the world to develop, through cooperative talks, treaties that guarantee the rights of nations to coexist within safe and secure borders. The Association applauds those nations that have negotiated and continue to negotiate agreements with further guarantees of peace and cooperation.

The Association believes that the Education International should continue to facilitate the building of bridges of understanding and peace by initiating dialogue among education employees in areas of conflict. (85, 95)

I-3. International Court of Justice

The National Education Association believes in the concept of the rule of law throughout the world and recognizes that the International Court of Justice is one instrument to resolve international disputes peacefully.

The Association urges participation by the United States in deliberations before the court. (86, 97)

I-4. World Hunger

The National Education Association believes that worldwide attention needs to be focused on hunger and malnutrition. The Association supports continued relief to those in need as well as the education of children, youth, and adults concerning world hunger and its effects so that they may develop the capacity and the commitment to resolve these problems. (75, 89)

I-5. Covert Operations and Counterintelligence Activities

The National Education Association believes that U.S. covert operations and counterintelligence activities should be compatible with the basic principles of our democratic society.

The Association further believes that all such activities should be conducted under the jurisdiction of the executive and legislative branches of our government and that individuals must be held accountable when they work outside of the specific directives issued for a given operation. (89)

I-6. Nuclear Freeze/Cessation

The National Education Association believes that nuclear war, the common enemy of all nations and peoples, is not survivable. The proliferation of weapons technology and the sale and distribution of conventional and nuclear weapons increase the possibility of nuclear war.

The Association believes the United States and all other nations should adopt a verifiable freeze on the testing, development, production, upgrading, emplacement, sale, distribution, and deployment of nuclear weapons, materials, and all systems designed to deliver nuclear weapons. The Association supports the development of treaties for the cessation of all nuclear weapons testing, providing they contain adequate verification and enforcement provisions. The Association supports the development of treaties to eliminate the world's nuclear weapons arsenals. (82, 96)

I-7. Nuclear Facilities, Radioactive/Chemical Pollutants, and Waste Incineration

The National Education Association believes that strict monitoring of nuclear facilities and radioactive/chemical pollutants and waste incineration should be required. The Association urges the development and implementation of new technologies for the safe transport and recycling of all wastes. It further urges regulation of the U.S. Department of Energy by an independent agency to reduce the further radioactive pollution of our environment.

The Association supports programs that would educate the public to the dangers and benefits of nuclear power, recycling of nuclear wastes, problems of nuclear waste disposal, and health risks associated with waste incineration.

The Association believes that the people of a state should make the final determination as to whether or not toxic and/or nuclear waste processing sites or the transportation of nuclear waste shall be within their state boundaries. Contiguous states directly affected environmentally by processing sites should be included in the final determination. Strict guidelines concerning the construction and operation of waste incinerators should be required. The Association further believes that such facilities should not be constructed within a 10-mile radius of any school facility.

The Association further believes that education employees must be involved in the development and dissemination of emergency plans in the case of accidents that potentially could result in environmental or health hazards. (89, 97)

I-8. Global Environmental Restoration

The National Education Association believes that when pollution occurs the responsible entities must be accountable for an expeditious, complete cleanup and restoration of the environment and its ecological systems. (90, 93)

I-9. International Consumer Protection

The National Education Association believes that products sold and/or advertised abroad by U.S.-based companies must at least meet the consumer, health, and safety standards that are required for trade within the United States.

Furthermore, the Association opposes coercing other nations to accept U.S. products that do not meet those nations' consumer, health, and safety standards or practices. (90)

I-10. Human Rights

The National Education Association believes that the governments of all nations must respect and protect the basic human and civil rights of every individual, including equal access to education. The Association condemns any action that limits or prohibits the free and responsible exercise of these rights and believes that all education employees must lead in the effort to prevent any encroachment on basic human and civil rights. The Association also believes that the U.S. government should withhold all forms of military aid to governments that violate these rights.

The Association believes that violence is abhorrent. The Association condemns violence, as well as the tolerance of violence, and believes that all nations must pass and enforce measures to curtail and prevent actions and practices that inflict pain, suffering, mutilation, or death; and offer asylum to those threatened by such actions.

The Association deplores the holding of hostages, all forms of torture, and the taking of human life in the name of making a political statement. The Association believes that it is the responsibility of all governments to discourage such actions by individuals or groups of individuals.

The Association calls upon all nations to release all education employees and students who are being held without charge and to refrain from the use of coercion and arbitrary detention to punish the people of a specific area of their territories. (77, 97)

I-11. Civil Rights

The National Education Association is committed to the achievement of a totally integrated society. The Association calls upon Americans to eliminate — by statute and practice — barriers of race, color, national origin, religion, philosophical beliefs, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, size, marital status, and economic status that prevent some individuals, adult or juvenile, from exercising rights enjoyed by others, including liberties decreed in common law, the Constitution, and statutes of the United States. Civil order and obedience to the law must be ensured without abridgment of human and civil rights. All individuals must be assured a speedy and fair judicial process with free legal counsel for those in need. To be effective citizens, individuals must be trained and aided in developing strategies and expertise that will enable them to operate effectively in a democratic society.

The Association opposes any amendment to the U.S. Constitution that curtails basic civil rights. (69, 95)

I-12. Human and Civil Rights of Children and Youth

The National Education Association believes that the human and civil rights of children and youth must be protected and opposes the exploitation of children and youth under any circumstances.

The Association condemns the use of children and youth by organizations, governments, and political/military movements to advance their political objectives. The Association condemns governments that subject young people to physical or mental abuse, violence, and unwarranted detention or incarceration. The Association opposes the impressment or acceptance of minors into the service of the armed forces of any government or into the service of revolutionary forces under any circumstances.

The Association further believes that children and youth in detention centers must be provided educational programs that will enable them to become contributing members of society. Teachers in such centers must be prepared to provide instruction in life skills and learning skills.

The Association opposes the imposition of the death penalty or life imprisonment without parole on individuals whose offenses were committed prior to age 18. The Association condemns the practice of placing children and youth in trouble in abusive environments. The Association further opposes the placement of children and youth who are not charged with any offense in facilities with persons who are charged with criminal offenses. The Association believes that there must be separate facilities for the detention and for the incarceration of children and youth and supports the development of alternatives to supplement the use of such facilities. (88, 97)

I-13. Family Planning

The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom.

The Association urges the government to give high priority to making available all methods of family

planning to women and men unable to take advantage of private facilities.

The Association further urges the implementation of community-operated, school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel. (85, 86)

I-14. The Right to Organize

The National Education Association believes that all people have the right to organize in order to achieve an improvement of their living conditions through their own free and independent unions and organizations. The Association urges that this right be advocated where it is now abused or denied and strengthened where it is now secured.

The Association deplores anti-union activities by business interests, school districts, and government agencies, including efforts that attempt to destroy and undermine labor unions and organizations, penalize members for union involvement, and deprive workers of their right to organize and bargain. (82, 93)

I-15. Displaced Workers

The National Education Association believes that entities that close, move, sell, downsize, or reorganize their facilities have an obligation to provide displaced employees with a variety of retraining and support programs. These entities shall assist their employees with placement in jobs having comparable pay and benefits and shall maintain existing union contracts.

The Association opposes the use of public funds to encourage the movement of U.S. companies to other countries at the expense of U.S. union labor. (92, 93)

I-16. Use of Union-Made Products and Services

The National Education Association recognizes the historical role of organized labor in its struggle for economic and social justice. The Association advocates the use of union-made products and services. The Association supports the use of appropriately established boycotts and picket lines. (91, 94)

I-17. Migrant Workers

The National Education Association is concerned with the plight of migrant workers.

The Association supports the efforts of migrant workers to be represented in collective bargaining by the organization of their choice. (85)

I-18. Immigration

The National Education Association supports efforts to improve the immigration process, including the provision of due process, political asylum, and timely legalization without regard to national origin.

The Association opposes any immigration policy that denies human and/or civil rights or educational opportunities to immigrants and their children regardless of their immigration status. The Association condemns such policies as inhumane and discriminatory. The Association supports policies that protect the integrity of the family unit.

The Association believes that English and citizenship classes must be available in sufficient numbers to ensure that immigrating individuals can comply with all federal mandates for permanent residence and/or citizenship. (84, 95)

I-19. Housing and Health Care for All

The National Education Association believes that all members of our society have the right to adequate housing and health care. The Association supports programs to provide adequate housing and health care for the homeless and others in need of assistance. (89, 97)

I-20. Fair Housing

The National Education Association believes that all citizens should be free to reside in the communities of their choice. The Association supports the elimination of the discriminatory practice of redlining. (69, 97)

I-21. Invasion of Privacy

The National Education Association believes that every individual has a right to privacy. The Association continues to be concerned about the indiscriminate surveillance of citizens or groups by private and public agencies. The Association condemns the use of information gathered and stored and the exchange of such information without explicit release from the person or persons involved.

The Association also believes that rights to privacy and confidentiality must be guaranteed through federal and state legislation. (70, 98)

I-22. Freedom of Creative Expression

The National Education Association supports freedom of expression in the creative arts and therefore deplores any efforts by government to suppress, directly or indirectly, such expression. The Association further supports the freedom of publicly funded agencies to exercise judgment in the awarding of grants to individuals and organizations. (90)

I-23. Violence Against Women and Girls Worldwide

The National Education Association condemns domestic and other violence against women and girls, as well as the tolerance of such violence, and believes that all nations should pass and enforce measures to curtail and prevent actions, policies, and practices that inflict pain, suffering, or death. (93, 97)

I-24. Sexual Assault

The National Education Association supports efforts that will prevent and protect members of our society from becoming victims of sexual assault. The Association urges states to develop a systematic process for gathering evidence when such assault occurs and supports the use of DNA testing as a means to identify perpetrators of sexual assault. Further, the Association supports fair and equitable treatment by health, hospital, and law enforcement agencies for sexual assault victims. The Association believes that it is a violation of the victims' right to privacy to release the names of the victims or to have their past sexual history admitted as evidence in assault cases. The Association recognizes the importance of and urges the rehabilitation of the assailant and the protection of due process rights for both the victim and the assailant. (81, 91)

I-25. Human Relations in the School

The National Education Association believes that improved human relations is essential to the school environment. To improve human relations in all schools, the Association calls for —

a. School recruitment and staffing policies that will ensure culturally diverse school employees

b. Appropriate classroom and other student-related activities, particularly those that are responsive to the cultural diversity and historical backgrounds of our society

c. Further development of continuing education programs to educate school and community personnel

d. Reduction of the ratio of students to licensed staff. This reduction should be to the level teachers determine to be essential to improved learning

e. Development of ways to improve community-police and student-police relations through the joint efforts of school, community, and law enforcement agencies

f. Joint discussions to promote understanding of human and civil rights and responsibilities in all segments of society

g. Development and implementation of curricula that teach students about positive human relations. (72, 94)

I-26. Martin Luther King Day

The National Education Association believes that Martin Luther King Day should be a state holiday in every state to focus on the importance of human relations. The Association encourages the observance of this day to promote good will among all people. (69, 97)

I-27. Freedom of Religion

The National Education Association believes that freedom of religion is a fundamental human right. The Association believes that choice of religion is an intensely personal decision. Instruction in religious doctrines and practices is best provided within a family setting and/or by religious institutions.

The Association also believes that schools should teach the rights and responsibilities associated with the freedom of religion, the religious heritage and diversity of the United States, respect for the religion of others, and the historical and cultural influences of various world religions.

The Association further believes that local school boards should adopt policies that govern religious activities on school property. Such policies must respect the separation of church and state; govern voluntary, student-led meetings with adult supervision before or after normal school hours; treat all religions on an equal basis; and protect the rights of students and education employees.

The Association opposes any federal legislation or mandate that would require school districts to schedule a moment of silence. The Association particularly opposes a moment of silence as a condition for receiving federal funds. (95, 98)

I-28. Sectarian Practices in the School Program

The National Education Association believes that the constitutional provisions on the establishment of and the free exercise of religion in the First Amendment require that there be no sectarian practices in the public school program.

The Association opposes the imposition of sectarian practices in the public school program and urges its affiliates to do the same. (78, 86)

I-29. Gun-Free Schools and the Regulation of Deadly Weapons

The National Education Association believes that all students and educational employees must be allowed to learn and work in an environment free of unauthorized guns and other deadly weapons. Severe penalties should be enacted and strenuously enforced for criminal actions involving guns and other deadly weapons, especially in school settings, and for those who profit from the illegal sale, importation, and distribution of these weapons. The Association believes that individuals who bring guns or deadly weapons to school should be excluded from school and school grounds until undergoing mandatory prescribed intervention.

The Association also believes that strict prescriptive regulations are necessary for the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale and resale of handguns and ammunition magazines. The possession by the private sector of automatic weapons and military-style semiautomatic assault weapons should be illegal, except for historical and collection purposes which must be strictly regulated. A mandatory waiting period for a background check should occur prior to the sale of all firearms.

The Association further believes that gun owners should participate in educational programs that stress responsible ownership, including safe use and storage of guns. (82, 98)

I-30. Victims of a Crime

The National Education Association believes that victims of a crime should be treated with dignity and compassion, without the fear of intimidation. Victims and their families should be notified of and have the right to be present/represented at all hearings and legal proceedings involving the defendant/perpetrator.

The Association also believes that victims and their families must be made aware of and have free access to necessary services/programs. These services/programs must be funded by the appropriate government agencies. (87, 96)

I-31. Military Veterans

The National Education Association believes that many veterans of military conflicts are suffering physical, social, and psychological problems because of their involvement in combat and related military activities. The Association supports federal and state increases in benefits and programs, including retirement benefits, for these military veterans to meet their needs. (81, 97)

I-32. Traffic Safety

The National Education Association believes that traffic deaths and injuries must be reduced. The Association supports —

a. Enactment and enforcement of effective and equitable legislation regulating driving while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other mind-altering substances

b. Appropriate educational experiences for students regarding the effects of driving while under the influence

c. Recognized community and school groups in their efforts to reduce death and injury from accidents caused by drivers under the influence

d. Legislation requiring mandatory restraint of all passengers in motor vehicles, excluding school buses. The legislation should require the use of seat belts for adults and minor children and approved car seats for infants

e. Legislation requiring the use of helmets for bicycle and motorcycle riders

f. Continued research and the development of safety features and passive restraint systems for passengers in school buses and for the inclusion of those features shown to be effective. (82, 97)

I-33. Federal and State Support for Public Welfare

The National Education Association believes that conditions which cause reliance on public welfare must be alleviated. The Association also believes that the federal and state governments must work together to provide assistance in education, housing, child care, health care, transportation, and job training/placement. Furthermore, assistance must continue during the transition from welfare to work.

The Association also believes that no current employee should be displaced nor position abolished as a result of government efforts to move individuals from welfare to work. (71, 97)

I-34. Protection of Senior Citizens

The National Education Association condemns the physical, mental, and economic abuse of senior citizens.

The Association condemns those policies and practices that result in poor medical care; physical, mental, and economic abuse; excessive pharmaceutical charges; inadequate dietary programs; deteriorating living quarters; and untrained staff for patients and residents of nursing and retirement homes.

The Association supports legislation and consumer education to eliminate the use of unethical techniques, scare tactics, and misrepresentation to divest senior citizens of their financial resources.

The Association believes that its affiliates should join in political action to bring about legislative and administrative reform at the state and national levels. (78, 97)

I-35. People Living with HIV/AIDS

The National Education Association believes that people living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) should be ensured fair and equitable treatment allowing equal access to education, employment, living conditions, and all rights guaranteed by law. (94)

I-36. Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

The National Education Association believes that all buildings should be in compliance with the accessibility standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. (88, 97)

I-37. Protection of Persons with Mental Disabilities

The National Education Association believes that the human and civil rights of individuals with mental disabilities must be protected.

The Association also believes that individuals with mental disabilities who have committed criminal offenses should receive all diagnostic and/or psychological services that meet their needs and guarantee their right not to be abused while incarcerated. Further, the Association believes that individuals with mental disabilities should not be subjected to capital punishment. (89, 97)

I-38. Care of the Mentally Ill

The National Education Association believes that it is society's responsibility to provide quality care for individuals suffering from debilitating mental illness.

Such persons should have access, as needed, to primary hospital care, outpatient services, necessary medication, social services, and housing in the least restrictive environment.

Financial assistance for such care should be based upon the ability of the individual to pay. (86)

I-39. Elimination of Racial, Ethnic, and Religious Discrimination

The National Education Association is committed to the elimination of racial, ethnic, religious, and all other forms of discrimination.

The Association condemns any code or system of discrimination and exploitation and believes that sanctions are both justified and necessary against governments, organizations, businesses, and/or groups that utilize or support discriminatory practices. (76, 97)

I-40. Discrimination by Organizations

The National Education Association believes that organizations are strengthened by offering membership on a nondiscriminatory basis.

The Association shall not participate in programs sponsored by any organization and/or its auxiliary that deny membership to certain segments of our society on a discriminatory basis when such denials are not related to the stated purposes of the organization, nor shall the Association utilize the facilities of such organizations.

The Association urges its affiliates and members not presently holding membership in such organizations to discontinue any involvement with such organizations and urges that its members not participate in, provide programs to, or join organizations utilizing exclusionary membership.

The Association urges its members now holding membership in such organizations to work actively from within for the total elimination of such exclusionary clauses. (74, 98)

I-41. Institutional Discrimination

The National Education Association believes that the fabric of our society is strengthened when the

contributions of all its diverse members are encouraged and embraced. The Association recognizes that institutional and public policies and practices sometimes discriminate against some segments of the population.

The Association deplores those social, institutional, and governmental actions and policies that engender discriminatory practices. The Association encourages its affiliates at the state and the local level, in concert with community organizations, to educate the public to bring about an awareness of such policies and practices, and to actively work to eliminate them. (98)

I-42. Use of Prejudicial Terms and Symbols

The National Education Association deplores prejudice based on race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, size, marital status, or economic status and rejects the use of names, symbols, caricatures, emblems, logos, and mascots that promote such prejudice. (92, 94)

I-43. Hate-Motivated Violence

The National Education Association deplores incidents of hate-motivated physical and verbal attacks against individuals or groups because of their race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, size, marital status, or economic condition. The Association further deplores materials that actively promote such incidents. The Association supports the development of programs by community groups to oppose and eliminate hate-motivated acts of violence. (91, 98)

I-44. Violence Against and Exploitation of Asian/Pacific Islanders

The National Education Association opposes the expression of covert and overt sentiments, threats, and incidents of racially motivated, physical and verbal violence toward Asian/Pacific Islanders. The Association believes that community-based educational programs should be developed in conjunction with Asian/Pacific Islander groups to eliminate this violence. The Association supports clear and consistent law enforcement to protect the civil and human rights of the victims of such violence.

The Association opposes the exploitation of women as mail-order brides. (84, 98)

I-45. Internment/Containment Policies

The National Education Association recognizes that restrictive and/or punitive action based on race or national origin is a violation of constitutional guarantees and is repugnant to the American ideals of life, liberty, and property.

The Association condemns the practice of internment/containment of racially identifiable segments of our newly immigrated and current populations. (82, 98)

I-46. Reparation of Native American Remains

The National Education Association believes in the dignity of the dead and encourages laws to prevent the robbing of graves.

The Association also believes that the remains of thousands of Native Americans in storage throughout the United States should be returned for interment to the tribes and/or areas from which they were taken. The Association further believes that American Indian sacred items in museum collections should be returned to the tribes of their origin. (89, 98)

I-47. English as the Official Language

The National Education Association recognizes the importance of an individual's native language and culture and the need to promote and preserve them through instruction, public service announcements, and all other forms of communication.

The Association believes that, although English is the language of political and economic communication in the United States, efforts to legislate English as the official language disregard cultural pluralism; deprive those in need of education, social services, and employment; and must be challenged. (87, 93)

I-48. Inclusive Medical Studies

The National Education Association believes that women and members of racial minority groups must be included in the samples of all medical studies, surveys, and research purporting to yield results applicable to all segments of a population. (91)

I-49. Sexual Harassment

The National Education Association recognizes that sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination or abuse.

The Association believes that classroom teachers, faculty, staff, and students should be protected from sexual harassment. The Association encourages its affiliates to work with local school districts and institutions of higher education to—

a. Establish strong policies defining and prohibiting sexual harassment

b. Develop educational programs designed to help people recognize, understand, prevent, combat, and eliminate sexual harassment

c. Develop and publicize a grievance procedure that encourages the reporting of incidents of sexual harassment, resolves complaints promptly, and protects the rights of all parties

d. Encourage the formation and training of staff/student support groups to assist in the counseling of targets of alleged sexual harassment. (88, 98)

I-50. Equal Opportunity for Women

The National Education Association believes that all persons, regardless of gender, must have equal opportunity for employment, promotion, compensation (including equal pay for comparable worth), and leadership in all activities.

The Association supports an amendment to the U.S. Constitution (such as the Equal Rights Amendment), which guarantees that equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state because of gender. The Association urges its affiliates to support ratification of such an amendment. The Association also supports the enactment and full funding of the Women's Educational Equity Act.

The Association also believes that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission must have cease-and-desist authority to act in all cases of discrimination based on race, creed, color, age, national origin, sexual orientation, and gender.

The Association also believes that governing boards and education associations must eliminate discriminatory practices against women in employment, promotion, and compensation. Personnel policies must include family leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, leave for adoption of a child, child-care leave, and professional leave which encourages women to participate in professional growth experiences and to prepare for administrative and executive positions.

The Association also believes that national, state, and local agencies should consider research specifically related to women and their health problems and concerns.

The Association also believes that professional associations at all levels should adopt policies that ensure women equal access to elective, appointive, and staff positions.

The Association further believes in the establishment of women's education committees in local and state associations as a vehicle for implementation of equal opportunity for women.

The Association believes that sexism and sex discrimination must be eliminated and endorses the use of nonsexist language. (69, 97)

I-51. Personal Relationships in Higher Education

The National Education Association recognizes that in institutions of higher education adult students and educators may establish personal relationships. However, such relationships should be voluntary and not be used to coerce or influence others for personal advantage. Thus, the Association believes that sexual relationships between a faculty member and a student currently enrolled in the faculty member's course, or under the supervision or direction of any higher education employee, are unprofessional. The Association encourages its affiliates in institutions of higher education to seek the establishment of strong policies declaring such relationships unprofessional. (89, 98)

I-52. Minority-Owned Businesses

The National Education Association believes that minority-owned businesses should be encouraged. The Association also believes that the federal government should initiate and continue policies that encourage minority-owned businesses. (89, 98)

I-53. Integration in the Public Schools

The National Education Association believes that it is imperative that full integration of the nation's schools be effected.

The Association recognizes that acceptable integration plans will include affirmative action programs and a variety of devices, such as geographic realignment, pairing of schools, grade pairing, and satellite and magnet schools. Some arrangements may require busing of students in order to comply with established guidelines adhering to the letter and spirit of the law.

The Association urges its affiliates to encourage school boards to study and consider seriously the negative impact on minority students when schools located in minority neighborhoods are targeted for closing.

The Association will assist its affiliates to assure that education employees, parents, and students are involved in the development of plans designed to achieve integration. The Association also believes that state and federal agencies should provide funds necessary to implement integration programs, including funds for student transportation. The Association also urges participation in citizen advisory committees—consisting of members designated by the local education association, parents, and representatives of community organizations, business, clergy, and media—that reflect the ethnic makeup of the community in developing, implementing, and evaluating student desegregation plans.

The Association further believes that integrated schools must provide students with equal access to all curricular and extracurricular programs and to technological equipment and knowledge.

The Association opposes any attempts to delay or impede implementation of desegregation orders and will, therefore, resist efforts of school boards to resegregate integrated schools.

The Association will continue to oppose vigorously the systematic displacement or demotion of minority, especially Black, teachers and administrators to achieve integration. The Association also opposes actions of boards of education to finance integration plans through reduction of school staff. In addition, the Association will oppose the capricious reassignment and displacement of Hispanic teachers and administrators because of desegregation and bilingual programs. (69, 98)

I-54. Ethnic-Minority Educators

The National Education Association believes that multiracial teaching staffs are essential to the operation of schools. The Association deplores the current trend of diminishing numbers of ethnic-minority educators.

The Association urges local and state affiliates and appropriate governing bodies and agencies to work to achieve and maintain ethnic diversity in all categories of educational employment. The Association further urges U.S. Department of Defense schools actively to recruit and hire ethnic-minority educators. (79, 97)

J. OBTAIN FOR ITS MEMBERS THE BENEFITS OF AN INDEPENDENT, UNITED EDUCATION PROFESSION

J-1. Strong Professional Associations

The National Education Association believes that an independent and professional organization is vital to its members and affiliates. This independence must be safeguarded in any alignments with other organizations.

The Association further believes that the unity of effort of a professional organization promotes the interests of its members and advances a strong, healthy learning environment. (74, 94)

J-2. Supporting Locals in Jeopardy

The National Education Association believes that assistance should be afforded to those affiliates that exist within concentrated territories of competing organizations. The Association encourages its affiliates to initiate and support programs that will strengthen and enhance the local organizational structure and promote membership growth within the Association. Continuous communications and cooperation of local, state, and national bodies are keys to the success of the local affiliates in building solid professional organizations.

The Association believes that assistance should be given to those local Associations that have been—

a. Targeted for take-over efforts

b. Taken over by competing organizations

c. The object of "association busting."

Members of affiliated locals that are not the bargaining agent must be provided an effective means of processing grievances. (76, 96)

J-3. Membership Participation in the Association

The National Education Association believes that every member has the right and obligation to participate fully in the Association. The opportunity to participate in the Association must be afforded every member without fear, intimidation, or retribution.

The Association also believes that school policies should provide released time without loss of pay to those who are fulfilling leadership responsibilities, attending meetings, or participating in other Association activities. (69, 94)

J-4. Minority Participation in the Association

The National Education Association believes that at every phase of governance and on all decision-making levels of the Association there should be minority participation at least proportionate to the identified ethnic-minority population of that geographic level.

Ethnic minorities should be included as candidates for positions at all levels. The Association should promote minority participation in program development and should employ minorities and women in staff positions consistent with Association affirmative action policies.

The Association also believes that its affiliates should maintain a commitment to organizational policies and programs that promote the training and involvement of minorities at all levels of the organization.

The Association believes that there is a need for systematic evaluation of minority participation at all levels. (72, 96)

J-5. Student Member Participation

The National Education Association believes that eligible students should have the opportunity to join the Association. The Association further believes that students should be encouraged to participate in the Association at the local, state, and national levels. Preprofessional and leadership training should be priorities.

Further, the Association believes that local advisers should be members of the Association. (91, 94)

J-6. Retired Member Participation

The National Education Association believes that its retired members should have the opportunity to participate in the Association at the local, state, and national levels.

The Association further believes that retired members are a valuable asset in furthering the goals of the Association in areas including—but not limited to—political action, legislative lobbying, member training, crisis assistance, and other programs in which their years of experience have lead to their cumulative expertise. (76, 97)

J-7. Promotion of Teaching as a Career Choice

The National Education Association supports the establishment of organizations involving students interested in the field of education as a profession. The Association believes that its state affiliates should promote the establishment of such organizations at all age levels and encourage its members to serve as advisers. (80, 96)

J-8. Universal Education Employee Rights

The National Education Association supports the efforts of all associations of education employees in the world to secure basic rights for their members. The Association commends those education employees and students around the world who champion academic freedom and campaign against illiteracy, especially when their activities must be conducted under oppressive and often life-threatening conditions.

The Association stands ready to help all associations of education employees obtain their basic rights as listed in the NEA resolutions.

The Association condemns all governments for their roles in any acts of injustice against education employees and their organizations and, thus, the children and youth of those countries. The Association urges the U.S. government to refrain from supporting any governments that suppress academic freedom and literacy.

The Association urges the U.S. government to refrain from any plan for overt or covert action that would destabilize or overthrow any government or would adversely affect a government's successful campaign to improve literacy, equal education support, health care, and living and working conditions. (81, 95)

J-9. Organizations of Other Nations

The National Education Association believes that a strong international community of educators is necessary to promote international understanding and to defend the interests of education employees in all countries. The Association actively supports the Education International and will continue to cooperate with professional education organizations of other nations. (69, 95)

To access the NEA Resolutions online, go to http://www.nea.org/resolutions.

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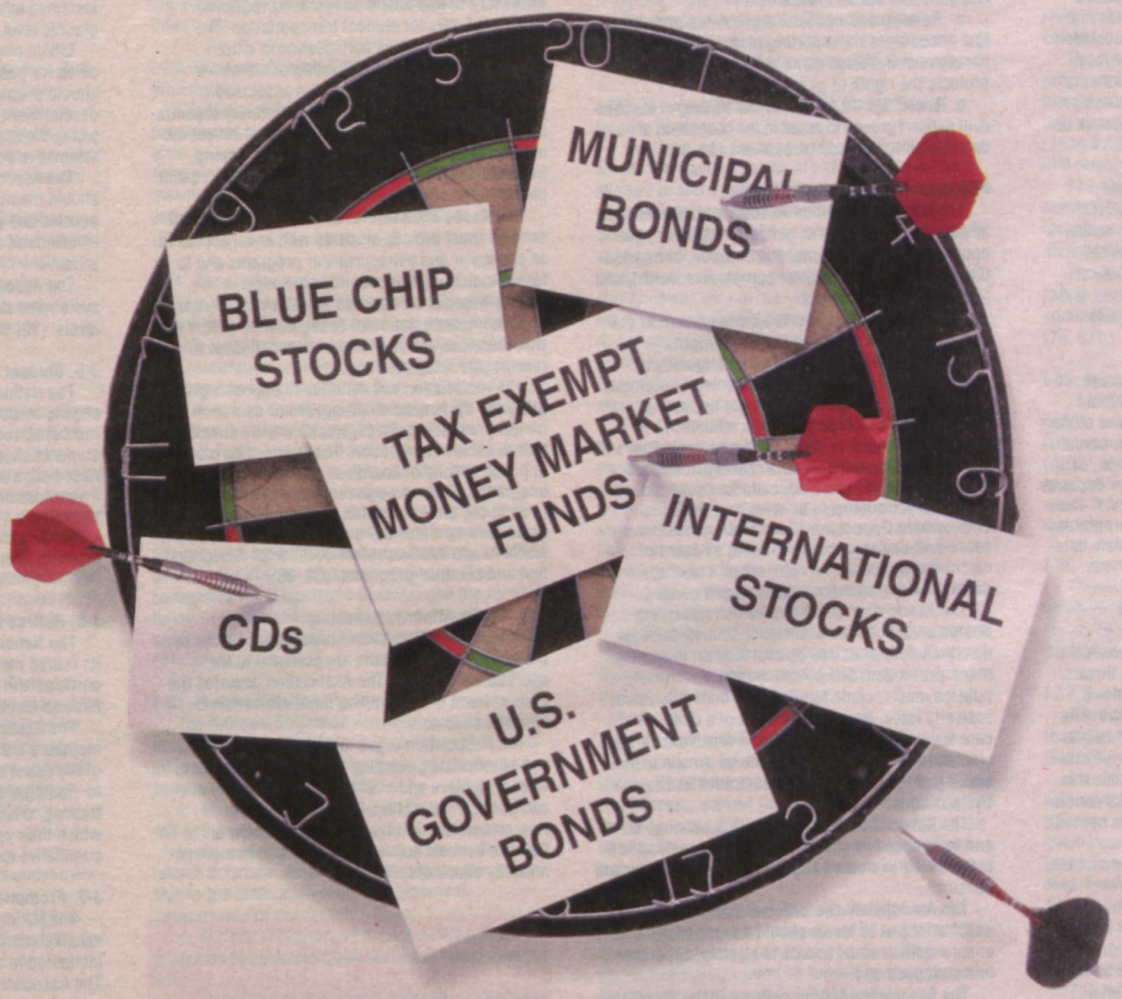

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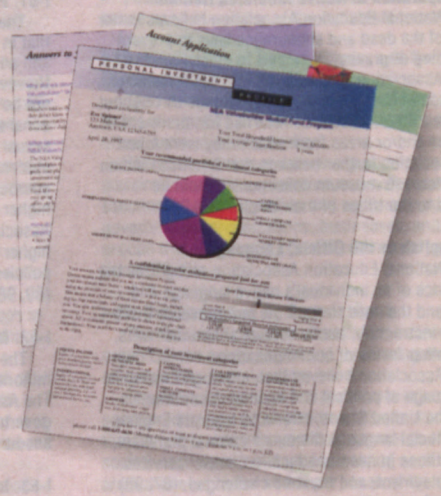

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Heads Up!

TV Tips

Vis-a-Vis: Blue and Black
PBS, Thursday, September 3, 10-11 p.m. ET. In this documentary, a South African police sergeant in Soweto meets his counterpart in Philadelphia via a digital video link. The two officers compare police work, crime, race relations, and life in the two countries.

Squigglevision
ABC, premiering Saturday, September 12, 12:30-1 p.m. ET. Formerly known as *Science Court*, this animated series has two new characters, Fizz and Martina, who introduce a science segment, as well as a math short ("See You Later Estimator") and a vocabulary lesson.

Tess of the D'Urbervilles
A&E, Sunday-Monday, September 13-14, 9-11 p.m. ET. Set in rural 19th century England, this adaptation showcases Thomas Hardy's classic about the tragic life of a young woman forced to help her poor family by working for people she believes are wealthy relatives. For details, go to www.AandE.com.

The U.S. Mexican War
PBS, Sunday, September 13 and Monday, September 14, 9-11 p.m. ET. For the first time, this story is told from multiple perspectives and languages, with prominent historians from both countries examining the conflict.

Book TV on C-SPAN2
C-SPAN2, premiering in September, Saturdays, 8 a.m., continuously through Mondays, 8 a.m. ET. This new programming block focuses on nonfiction and features author readings, panel discussions on publishing today, bookselling and reading, tours of bookstores, interviews with authors, and more. For scheduling information, go to www.c-span.org.

Franklin
CBS, Premiering Saturday, September 19, 7-7:30 a.m. ET. This animated series is based on the children's books by Paulette Bourgeois and Brenda Clark, and follows the adventures of Franklin, a young turtle who spends his days learning from his mistakes, his parents, and the world around him.

Ultimate Guide: Octopus
Discovery Channel, Sunday, September 20, 8-9 p.m. ET. A look at the octopus—from Puget Sound to the Cayman Islands to the Arctic Ocean—and how it changes color and shape, squirts ink for defense, and propels itself through the water.

Cold War
CNN, Volume I airs Sundays, September 27-December 13, 8-9 p.m. ET. Volume II will air Sundays, January 10-April 4, 1999. Kenneth Branagh narrates this 24-part documentary on the 20th century military and ideological conflict between the United States and the former Soviet Union. For a study guide, call 800/344-6219 or visit learning.turner.com.

Warner Bros.' Histeria
WB Television Network, premiering in September, Monday-Saturdays, check local listings. In this new animated series, children are taught world history through quick comedy sketches, informational segments, and songs.

Check Yourself
Fox Kids Network, public service announcements. This series of 30- and 60-second ads is designed to give kids tools for coping with anxiety, anger, stress, and peer pressure. Visit www.foxkids.com for details.

Eyewitness: Skeleton
PBS, Thursday, September 17, 8-8:30 p.m. ET. This natural sciences series examines how the skeleton is both a symbol of mankind's deepest fears and a miracle of biological engineering.

All New Captain Kangaroo
Fox Family Channel, Monday-Friday, 11-11:30 a.m. ET. The Captain, Mr. Moose, Mr. Greenjeans, and friends find a new home on the Fox Family Channel, formerly The Family Channel. For an educator's guide, go to www.kidsnet.org.

From the Top
Public radio stations, check local listings. Children ages 6-18 showcase their musical talents on this new weekly radio series taped live from the New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall in Boston. For more information, go to www.menc.org.

The Island on Bird Street
Showtime, premiering in September, check local listings. This European film is based on the book by Uri Orlev and tells the story of a young boy living in the Polish ghetto during World War II. Separated from his father, he creates a hiding place in a bombed-out building and saves the lives of two resistance fighters.

The Berenstain Bears
TLC, Monday-Friday, 7:30-8 a.m. ET. This animated series for young children features the fun-loving Bear family from the popular children's book series by Stan and Jan Berenstain.

CNN Newsroom
CNN, weekdays, 4:30-5 a.m. ET. This commercial-free program returns with new topics, including a look at Philadelphia and its history, male eating disorders, and the Congo. For a free classroom guide, go to learning.turner.com.

KIDSNET, a national resource for children's media in Washington, D.C., provides these listings. For additional listings and information, check out the KIDSNET Web sites at www.kidsnet.org and www.familyeducation.com/kidsnet.asp.

school stories

Want to know what's *really* happening in America's schools? School Stories, produced by NEA and The Learning Channel, offers you an insider's view on tough issues on and off campus. Here's the schedule:

Building Community
Thursday, September 10, 11:30 a.m. ET. After eight successful years in a poor, rural community, principal Steve Scroggs moved to a "Cadillac" of a school in North Carolina. What Scroggs found taught him that money and opportunity don't automatically build a sense of community.

Computers: Hype or Hope?
Thursday, September 17, 11:30 a.m. ET. Is all the time and expense of wiring schools and classrooms to the Internet worth the effort? A Princeton, New Jersey, school district offers educators' answers to this critical question.

Saving City Schools
Thursday, September 24, 11:30 a.m. ET. Can the nation's worst schools recover? A look at how Chicago schools are making a comeback with the help of parents, teachers, administrators, and community leaders.

Space Camp Challenge
Thursday, October 1, 11:30 a.m. ET. At Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama, 16 Michigan special education students reach for the stars, showing that higher expectations can work wonders for all kids.

The Drive To Teach
Thursday, October 8, 11:30 a.m. ET. An innovative professional development plan in Savannah, Georgia, helps education support staffers who want to become teachers pursue their education. The program recently won a $100,000 grant to expand its efforts.

Bonus for NEA members: Each episode of *School Stories* is available on video after airing. To order tapes, call the NEA Professional Library at 800/229-4200. In addition, educators have permission to tape episodes for educational use.

Heads Up

Free or Inexpensive

The Story's the Thing

Want to expose kids in grades 4-6 to Shakespeare, but worried about that intimidating prose? Acclaimed British

children's author E. Nesbit recounts the stories behind the iambic pentameter in *The Best of Shakespeare: Retellings of Ten Classic Plays*. $16.95 plus $3 s&h (California and North Carolina residents, add sales tax). ISBN#0195116895. Contact Oxford University Press Order Dept., 2001 Evans Rd., Cary, NC 27513, 800/451-7556. Fax: 919/677-1303.

Over the next decade, an estimated 2 million new teachers will be hired in the United States.

How can we ensure every student a quality teacher?

This September, you can help explore answers to this critically important question by joining — via cyberspace — the first national conference on teacher quality ever conducted by NEA and the American Federation of Teachers.

Interested in participating? All you need is access to the Internet. For details, check the NEA Web page at www.nea.org.

Shaping the Profession That Shapes the Future

nea

An on-site conference in Washington, D.C., September 25-27, 1998.

aft

A virtual conference, for all America's educators, on the World Wide Web.

Career Move

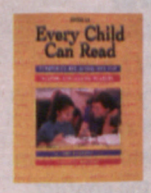
The authors of *Take This Job and Love It! Making the Mid-Career Move to Teaching* answer frequently asked questions about this special career change. Contains listings of state education departments and directories of teacher preparation and support programs. $19.95 plus $3 s&h. Contact Recruiting New Teachers, Inc., 385 Concord Ave., Belmont, MA 02478, 617/489-6000, ext. 121. On the Web: www.rnt.org.

Chemistry Standards

For curious chemistry teachers, the American Chemical Society has published *Chemistry in the National Science Education Standards: A Reader and Resource Manual for High School Teachers*. The guide defines concepts mentioned in the standards, and provides examples and charts for meeting NSES goals. $19.95 plus $3.50 s&h, Product HS55. Free to ACS members who are high school chemistry teachers. Call 800/209-0423 or send E-mail to t_simon@acs.org.

Vital Statistics

To inform the public about the welfare of our nation's children, each year the Annie E. Casey Foundation publishes the *Kids Count Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well-Being*. The book features tables, graphs and charts on teen birth and death rates, juvenile violent crime arrest rates, dropout rates, poverty rates, and more. Free. Contact the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Attn: Kids Count Data Book, 701 St. Paul St., Baltimore, MD 21202, 410/223-2890. Also available online at www.aecf.org/aeckids.htm.



Reading Help

Looking for ways to give individualized reading help? Canadian educators Jane Baskwill and Paulette Whitman offer scenarios and handouts for 15-minute sessions in *Every Child Can Read: Strategies and Guidelines for Helping Struggling Readers*. Suitable for grades 1-6. $10.95 plus $2.25 s&h. (AZ, CA, NC, and WA residents, add sales tax.) #10389. Contact Scholastic Professional Books, P.O. Box 7502, Jefferson City, MO 65102, 800/325-6149.

Water Fun

In *Great Experiments With H_2O*, Noel

Heads Up

and Phyllis Fiarotta combine clear explanations of science concepts with creative, fun, and easy experiments for children in grades 3-6. $9.95 plus $2 s&h. Contact Sterling Publishing Co. at 800/367-9692. Ask about the 20 percent discount for schools.

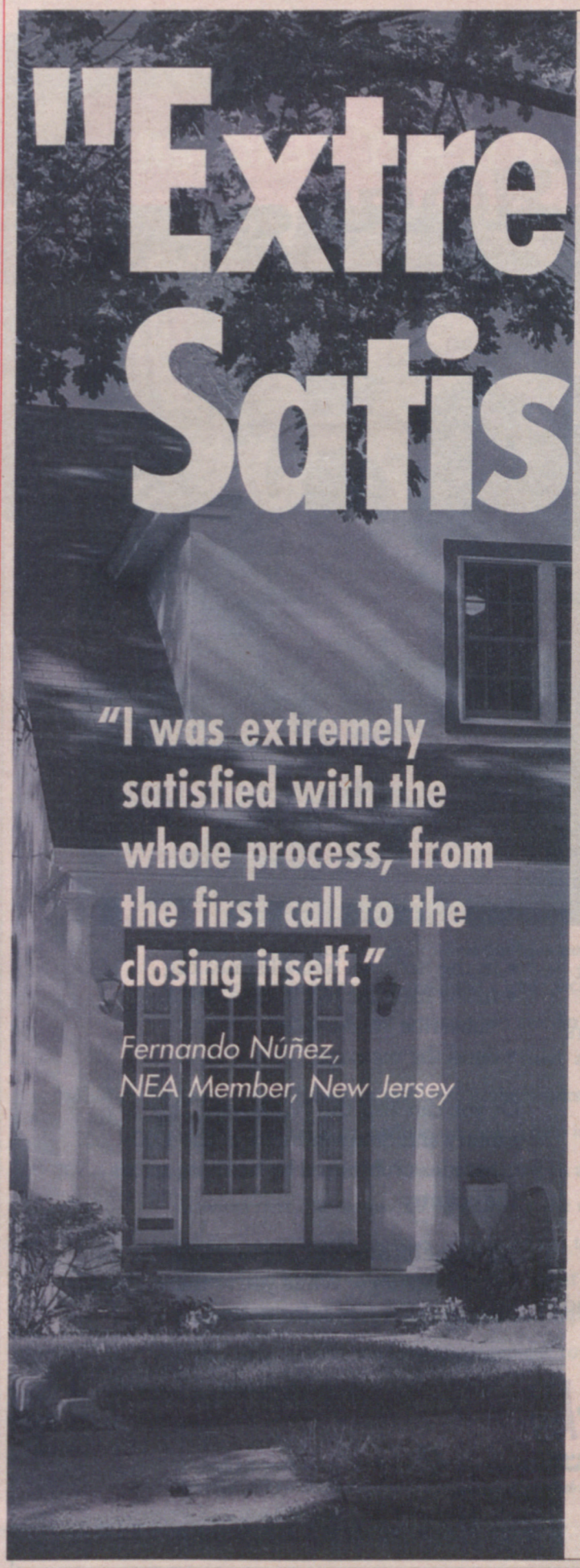
Teaching Moments
MegaSkills Moments for Teachers, a new book from Dorothy Rich, shows what you can do—quickly and easily—to turn everyday problem situations into opportunities for personal and professional growth. NEA member price: $9.95 plus $2.50 s&h. Use stock #2006-5-00-FF and take $3 off the member price. Offer expires October 15, 1998. Contact the NEA Professional Library, 800/229-4200.

Black History
Combining photographs, biographical sketches and personal narratives by the likes of Harriet Tubman, Louis Armstong, and Jackie Robinson, authors Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler retell the African-American journey. Warning: contains some upsetting images. ISBN#0195124197. $12.95 plus $3.50 s&h. (CA and NC residents, add sales tax.) Contact Oxford University Press Order Dept., 2001 Evans Rd., Cary, NC 27513, 800/451-7556. Fax: 919/677-1303.

Design Technology
Students in grades 5-8 learn science, communications, civil engineering, and teamwork with the mechanics activities in *Kids Tech: Hands-on Problem Solving with Design Technology*. After presenting tools and building blocks like pulleys and circuits, give your students these "design brief" handouts and let the mental gears grind! #DS29705. $17.95 plus $2.50 s&h (CA residents add sales tax). Contact Dale Seymour Publications, P.O. Box 5026, White Plains, NY 10602, 800/872-1100. Fax: 800/551-7637.

Looking for Free Stuff?
If you're always in search of something (good) for nothing, check out the newest title in NEA's Teacher-to-Teacher series. In *How To Get Grants and Free Stuff*, master grant writers share practical tips and winning strategies for getting grants and free stuff for your classroom. NEA member price: $9.95 plus $2.50 s&h. Use stock #2914-3-00-FF. To order, contact the NEA Professional Library, 800/229-4200.

Exploring Nonfiction
Spanning topics from music to travel, *Information Investigation: Exploring Nonfiction with Books Kids Love* provides handouts and outlines lesson plans for grades 3-6. Includes vocabulary lists, arts activities, bibliographies, and more. $17.95 plus $4 s&h (CO residents, add sales tax). Contact Fulcrum Publishing, 350 Indiana St., Suite 350, Golden, CO 80401, 800/992-2908, ext. 217. Fax: 800/726-7112.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Heads Up

Events

Historic 'Virtual' Conference

In Washington, D.C., from September 25 to 27, local and state leaders from NEA and the American Federation of Teachers will be gathering for a first-ever joint conference on promoting teacher quality.

The conference, titled "Shaping the Profession That Shapes the Future," is drawing a wide array of provocative speakers and presenters—but you don't have to come to Washington to hear and discuss what they have to say. In fact, if you have access to the Internet, you'll be able to "attend" the conference at no cost.

This teacher quality conference will be the first national "virtual" conference ever staged by NEA and AFT. NEA and AFT members will be able to hear key conference speakers and interact with presenters—and each other—through a special Web site that will open before the on-site conference actually opens and remain open after the on-site conference closes.

For complete information on how to register online, click your way to the NEA Web page at www.nea.org.

Sexual Harassment

NEA and the Safe Schools Coalition will sponsor a conference on "Sexual Assault and Harassment on Campus," October 15-17, in Orlando, Florida. The cost is $320.

The Coalition will also sponsor a conference on "Youth Violence and Substance Abuse," November 19-21, in Orlando. Cost: $280 through September 26, $320 through October 17.

For more information about these two events, contact the Safe Schools Coalition, Inc., 5351 Gulf Dr., P.O. Box 1338, Holmes Beach, FL 34218, 800/537-4903.

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Works4Me
nea's e-mail classroom tip of the week!

A great teacher is 1,001 actions—and a heart full of caring.

Announcements

IDEA Reauthorization

Experts will discuss "IDEA Reauthorization: Rules and Regulations" at 30 conferences across the nation from September through November. For details, contact LRP Publications, 800/727-1227 or 703/684-0510.

Earth Science Week

October 11-17 is Earth Science Week, and the American Geological Institute is celebrating its 50th anniversary by offering posters, activity lists, and other support materials. For details, check out the Earth Science Web site at www.earthsciweek.org or send E-mail to jjackson@agiweb.org.

Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF

Since 1950, National UNICEF Month and Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF have raised more than $100 million to support the world's neediest children.

This year's theme: nutrition. For free educational materials suitable for students in grades K-6—including a curriculum guide, poster, and suggestions for fundraising activities—call 800/FOR-KIDS. On the Web, go to www.unicef.org.

Grants

NFIE Leadership Grants

The NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education provides teachers, education support

Heads Up

personnel, and higher education faculty and staff with grants to participate in activities that deepen their content knowledge, improve their teaching skills, and prepare them for leadership.

As many as 50 grants of up to $1,000 will be awarded. The deadline: October 15. For details, contact NFIE, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 202/822-7840. On the Web: www.nfie.org. Fax: 202/822-7779.

Fulbright Fellowships

If you'd like to teach overseas, now's the time to apply for the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program funded by the United States Information Agency. Deadline: October 15. Contact: JBL, Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program, 600 Maryland Ave., S.W., Suite 320, Washington, DC 20024, 800/726-0479.

Gardening

If you have an outdoor school garden or plan to start one, the National Gardening Association can help. This year, NGA will give tools, seeds, garden products, and educational materials to 300 school and youth groups. Deadline: November 15. Call 800/538-7476. On the Web, go to www.wowpages.com/nga/home.html.

Community Service

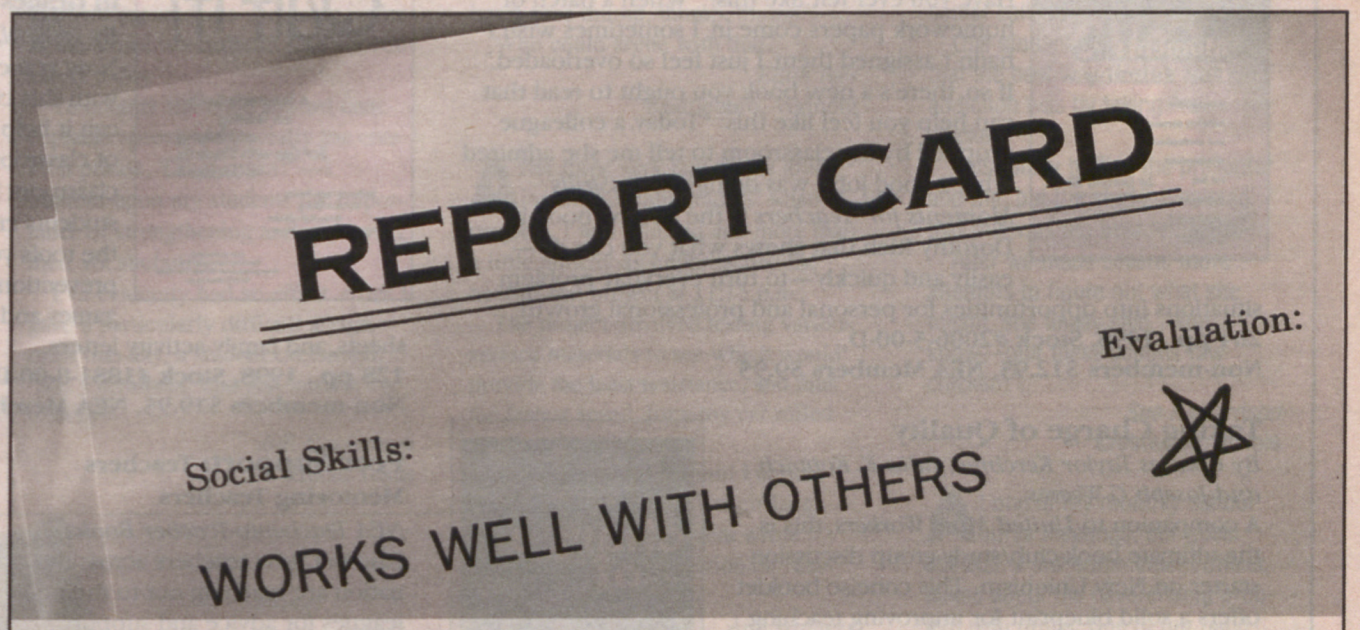
The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards honor high school and middle school students for volunteerism. State winners get $1,000 and a trip to Washington, D.C. National winners receive $5,000 and a crystal trophy for their school. Deadline: October 30. For more information, visit the following Web sites: www.prudential.com/community or www.nassp.org:80/services.

Awards

Disney Winners

Disney's annual American Teacher Awards honor 36 teachers for their achievements. This year, 23 of them are NEA members. They are:

- **Athletic coach:** Mark Antonoff, Downers Grove, Illinois; Denise Coats, Dallas, Texas; Maria Nolan, Secaucus, New Jersey.
- **Early childhood:** Carole Moyer, Columbus, Ohio; Larry Statler, San Jose, California.
- **General elementary:** John Schwartz, Peru, Indiana; Kathleen Wiebke, Scottsdale, Arizona.
- **English:** Helen Anderson Long, Clarksville, Tennessee.
- **Foreign language:** Celine Robertson, Lincoln, Nebraska; Martha Singer Semmer, Frisco, Colorado; Scott Wells, Long Beach, California.
- **Physical education and health:** Julie Campbell-Fouch, Long Beach, California; Janis Mathison, Shawano, Wisconsin; Joyce Louise McClendon Fletcher, Atlanta, Georgia.
- **Mathematics:** Marylin Leinenbach, Terre Haute, Indiana; James Henry Snider, Nashville, Tennessee.
- **Performing arts:** Timothy Brophy, Memphis, Tennessee; Jeffrey Haas, Ridgewood, New Jersey.
- **Science:** Jacqueline Leigh Omland, Aberdeen, South Dakota; John Zavalney, Los Angeles, California.
- **Visual arts:** Jerry Stover, Clay, West Virginia; Sara Bopp Strange, Montgomery, Alabama; Ann Ayers, Coral Springs, Florida.



Saturn was recently evaluated
by a number of educators.
And it looks like we got a pretty good response.

Not too long ago, a group of educators came to the Saturn plant, armed with plenty of paper and pencils, to find out how our union works with our management. And since it doesn't really qualify as a trade secret, we told them: We work as though we're on the same team—because we are. So when we make decisions, we make them together, and when we need to solve a problem, we do that together too. Now, some of these people were in the process of developing similar partnerships, in their own districts, and we wanted to help in any way we could. So we formed a partnership with the NEA, and we started an awards program, to recognize school districts that use teamwork to improve the quality of their schools. So when a school board works together with teachers, toward a common goal, we give the district an award—because we think what they're trying to do is important. (Besides, after years of giving out stars and happy faces, they deserve some encouragement too.)

SATURN UAW

For more information about the Saturn/UAW partnership award, or to nominate your school district, please call us at 1-800-738-1817. For more information about Saturn, visit our Web site at www.saturn.com. ©1998 Saturn Corporation.

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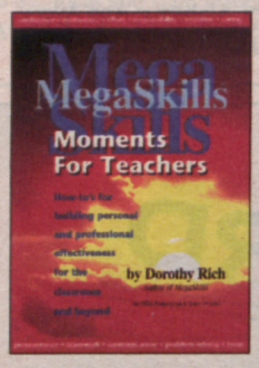
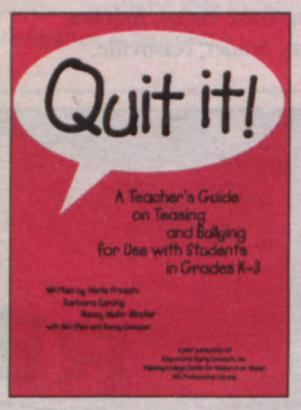


MegaSkills® Moments for Teachers

By Dr. Dorothy Rich

Have you ever felt like this?:"When a batch of homework papers come in, I sometimes wish I hadn't assigned them. I just feel so overloaded." If so, there's a new book you ought to read that can help you feel like this: "Today, a colleague dropped by my classroom to tell me she admired what a good job I was doing!" *MegaSkills Moments for Teachers* is the all-new book by Dorothy Rich that shows what you can do—easily and quickly—to turn everyday problem situations into opportunities for personal and professional growth.

204 pp., 1998, Stock #2006-5-00-D,
Non-members $12.95, NEA Members $9.95



Quit It!: A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Students in Grades K-3

By Froschl, Sprung, et al.

Now you can "bullyproof" your K-3 classroom with this comprehensive teacher's guide. How can it help you cope with the serious problem of classroom bullying? This book's nine classroom lessons not only help you and your students create awareness but also give you the tools you need to explore strategies for prevention. Plus, you'll get ideas for physical games and exercises, reproducible worksheets, and family activity letters.

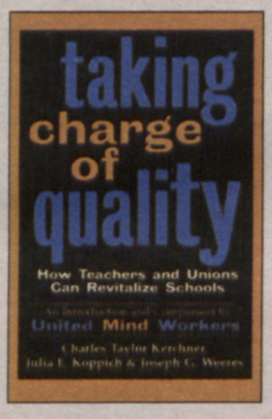
128 pp., 1998, Stock #1881-8-00-D,
Non-members $19.95, NEA Members $15.95

Taking Charge of Quality

By Charles Taylor Kerchner, Julia K. Koppich, and Joseph G. Weeres

A companion to *United Mind Workers*, this is the ultimate book-club/study-group discussion starter on New Unionism. This concise booklet offers a solid blueprint for improving teaching and learning, setting higher standards, and taking charge of the profession through peer review. Explore the role of teachers unions and the importance of teachers to American Democracy in the 21st century, by adding this book to your reading list today.

56 pp., 1998, Stock #2168-1-00-D,
Non-members $7.95, NEA Members $6.95


taking charge of quality
How Teachers and Unions Can Revitalize Schools
United Mind Workers
Charles Taylor Kerchner
Julia E. Koppich & Joseph G. Weeres

Peer Support: Teachers Mentoring Teachers

NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books

Find out how teachers across the nation are reaching out to their colleagues for advice and support through peer mentoring programs. Learn how they set up mentoring programs, created effective collegial partnerships, and gained insight into their roles as mentors and mentees. Whether you are already involved in a similar program, getting ready to start one in your district, or just interested in exploring this topic, you'll find this book a valuable resource.

96 pp., 1998, Stock #2913-5-00-D,
Non-members $12.95, NEA Members $9.95

Separated by Sex: A Critical Look at Single-Sex Education for Girls

AAUW Educational Foundation

Many schools are experimenting with the single-sex approach to learning. This book examines the findings of the foremost educational scholars on single-sex education in grades K-12 to discover if girls learn better apart from boys. It includes a literature review and a summary of a forum that considered what role single sex classes and schools should play in education reform.

108 pp., 1998, Stock #2505-9-00-D,
Non-members $12.95, NEA Members $11.95

How To Get Grants and Free Stuff

NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books

Running out to ideas to enhance your school's limited resources? This book tells you where to seek sources for grants, how to decide which grants to apply for, and how to maximize your chances for success You'll get expert advice on how to effectively write grants by following a simple formula. You'll also learn not only helpful tips on the essentials to include when applying for grants, but also the fatal flaws to avoid. Finally, you'll discover that getting free resources for your students is often just a matter of asking, as enterprising teachers share their strategies for getting free stuff—from computer equipment and technical support to sports gear and training support.

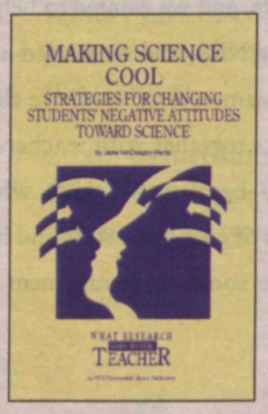
96 pp., 1998, Stock #2914-3-00-D,
Non-members $12.95, NEA Members $9.95

Making Science Cool: Strategies for Changing Students' Negative Attitudes Toward Science

By Jane McCraight-Wertz

Many students say science is boring. How can you counteract students' negative view of science? The answer is in *Making Science Cool*, where you'll discover the link between positive attitudes and student success; strategies for altering the classroom environment to make science exciting, accessible, and relevant; and ways to involve parents and peers in the process.

32 pp., 1998, Stock #1099-X-00-D,
Non-members $5.95, NEA Members $4.50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In the Light Lane

Tough Cookie? No, Brownie!

One day, Emily, a second grader in my physical education class, was dressed in her scout uniform. As she ran across the playground, she tripped and fell—hard!

I helped her up, dusted her off, and told her she could rest awhile.

When she claimed she was okay, I patted her on the back and said, "You're a tough cookie, Emily."

She looked at me quizzically and responded, "No, I'm not. I'm a Brownie!"

Corinne Ozolins
Martinsville, New Jersey

I was commiserating with Dan, an eleventh grade student in my American literature class, over the alarming news that a comet was projected to hit the earth in 30 years' time.

"Don't worry, Ms. Lombardo," he said. "You'll be dead in 30 years."

Diana Lombardo (age 38!)
Medford, Massachusetts

The children in my first grade class are always suspicious of others copying from their papers.

One day during a test, a girl raised her hand. When I approached her desk, she pointed to the boy next to her and said, "He's copying from my paper!"

He quickly replied, "No, I'm not!"

She insisted that he was.

"If I was copying from your paper," the boy challenged, "then why aren't my numbers backwards?"

Tasha Burrow
Memphis, Tennessee

After dismissing my first grade class at the end of the day, I noticed a bookbag and coat still on the coat rack. I didn't see anyone in the classroom, but the boys' bathroom door was shut.

Just as I was getting ready to knock on the door, the toilet flushed and a boy came out holding his reading workbook.

With a big smile he said, "I was reading in there. That's what my dad does."

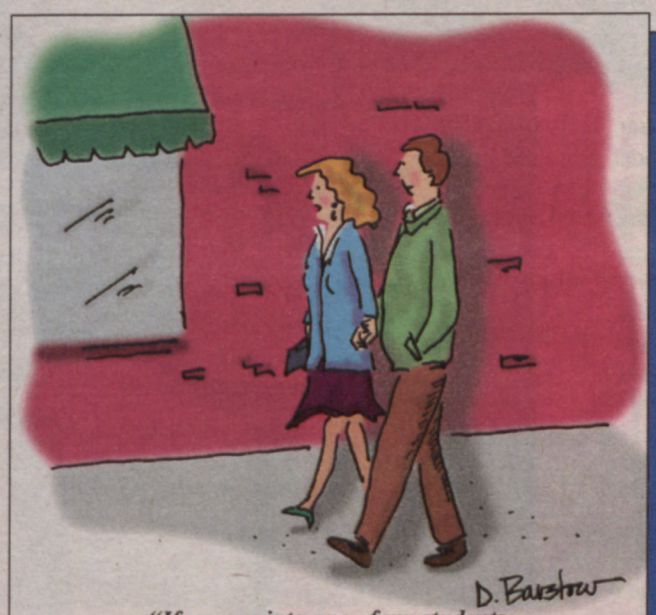
Lindsay Carlman
New Boston, Michigan

Keeping students' language under control is a difficult task for educators today.

To counter the trend toward unacceptable speech—especially the common phrase, "That sucks!"—I impress upon my students the importance of strengthening and improving their vocabularies.

I've evidently had an effect. After I gave a particularly difficult assignment one day, a student exclaimed, "Mr. Carruthers, that just inhales vigorously!"

Bill Carruthers
Hurst, Texas



"If we run into one of my students, I'll have to stop being normal and act like a teacher for a minute."

As I was reviewing multiplication facts with fourth grade students, I reminded them not to use their fingers to figure out the problems, but to think of the answers in their heads.

When I asked a little girl what six times seven was, she told me she couldn't figure it out.

"Why not?" I asked.

She simply answered, "Because there isn't enough room in my head!"

Karen Lee
Walton, Kentucky

While I was on a walk with the first and second graders I work with as a paraprofessional, one child confided that his cousin had a crush on one of our students.

When I asked him if he knew what a crush was, he explained, "That's when you like someone a lot and your heart goes thump, thump, thump."

Who could argue with that?

Edith Ives
Brattleboro, Vermont

After three very late nights grading my seventh graders' science projects, I was relieved and more than a little punchy as I approached the next-to-last project at 11:15 p.m.

The project involved testing various surface materials to see which would provide the least resistance, and thus the fastest speed, for a toy car rolled down an incline.

All was going well until I almost fell out of my chair laughing: One student wrote about tire friction on "ass-fault."

Ann Winders
Garden City, Kansas

At the beginning of the school year, one of my first graders came to me with a look of panic in his eyes. He explained that he had forgotten his lunch at home, and then he began to cry.

I reassured him that I would loan him money to buy his lunch, and that he could pay me back the next day.

But he was still very upset.

"I've been a packer all my life, and I can't change now!" he wailed.

I reminded him that he had only been packing his lunch for about two weeks. He finally consented to buying lunch.

Erin LaPenes
Munroe Falls, Ohio

During my SAT preparation course, I try to familiarize students with the exam format.

As I was describing the number of questions and the time constraints, a special ed student raised his hand and asked if he was entitled to extra time.

I told him I would have to double-check with one of our vice-principals, who oversees the administration of the test.

A girl raised her hand and called out, "Yes, he's a proctologist."

Nancy Manning
Seymour, Connecticut

High Times

My fifth graders attended a drug and alcohol program at a local health center. After a movie on the dangers of drugs, the presenter called for questions.

One student said she had heard that the best way to stop any addiction was by taking "raw chicken."

This totally baffled the presenter and me, but the student insisted that this was the best remedy.

After we made several more attempts to figure out what she meant, she finally said, "You know—quit these actions raw chicken!"

Sue Richardson
Crestwood, Illinois

At one of my monthly school nurse meetings, our guest speaker, a law enforcement officer, talked about the neverending problem with drugs. One of our handouts was titled, "Angel Dust."

A few days later, while riding in the car with me, my son picked the handout up off the seat and asked, "Angel dust—does that have something to do with Ash Wednesday?"

Charlene Vallino
Ligonier, Pennsylvania

While studying about drugs and alcohol, my fourth graders discussed how these substances affect the mind and body, and how addicted people often need professional help to quit.

On a quiz a few days later, I asked, "How can someone who drinks too much stop drinking?"

One boy wrote, "They could call AAA."

Dianne Piurkowski
New Ipswich, New Hampshire

Got Laughs?

■ Have a funny school story, anecdote, or vignette you'd like to share with other NEA members? You can send contributions to "In the Light Lane," *NEA Today,* 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, Fax 202/822-7206, E-mail neatoday@nea.org.

■ Want a classroom chuckle delivered to your E-mail box once a week? Subscribe to the new "In the Light Lane" mailing list. Just send an E-mail to **join-lightlane@list.nea.org** (no subject or message needed).

People

Makeup **Day**

Think teaching isn't a glamorous profession? Talk to Garfield Elementary's **Jean Struck**. In April, the Illinois teacher was whisked—by limo, no less—to "The Oprah Winfrey Show," where she had a full makeover and shared the stage with the famous host.

"It was like 'Queen for a Day,'" says Struck.

Winfrey dedicated her show to the important role educators play in students' lives—and, as a thank-you, treated a handful of teachers to makeovers, including designer outfits and chic new hairstyles.

"Mrs. Struck, struttin' her stuff!" Winfrey crowed as the second grade teacher came onstage sporting her new look.

Struck landed in the limelight after a student, Brianna Benson (pictured here), wrote to Winfrey about her favorite teacher.

"Mrs. Struck helped me believe in myself," the once painfully shy student wrote.

For Struck, a highlight of the experience "was meeting the other teachers and hearing their stories."

From the fashion office of Marshall Fields to a swank Chicago salon, "We were together the whole time, and we were treated like queens," she says. "Nothing was too good for us. We took limos everywhere."

Has she kept up her new look? "I really like my hair, but the outfit definitely is not me," Struck says. "And I haven't put on that much makeup since."

For the show, a team of stylists fussed over Struck's appearance for hours—a bit different from getting ready for second graders, she laughs.

George Burns © 1998 HARPO Productions, Inc. All rights reserved.

On a **Roll**

Keep to the left if you step into the halls of Idaho's Moscow High School after 4 p.m—or you might get bowled over by **Karla Harman** and her band of Rollerblading teachers.

In January, Harman (far left) and a half dozen other teachers began whirling through the halls for an hour four times a week, getting fit and chasing away the winter blahs.

"It started as a lark because I wanted to teach my students how to do it," explains Harman, a phys ed and health teacher. She ordered skates and gear through a Rollerblade program that offers discounts to schools, then invited colleagues to learn with her.

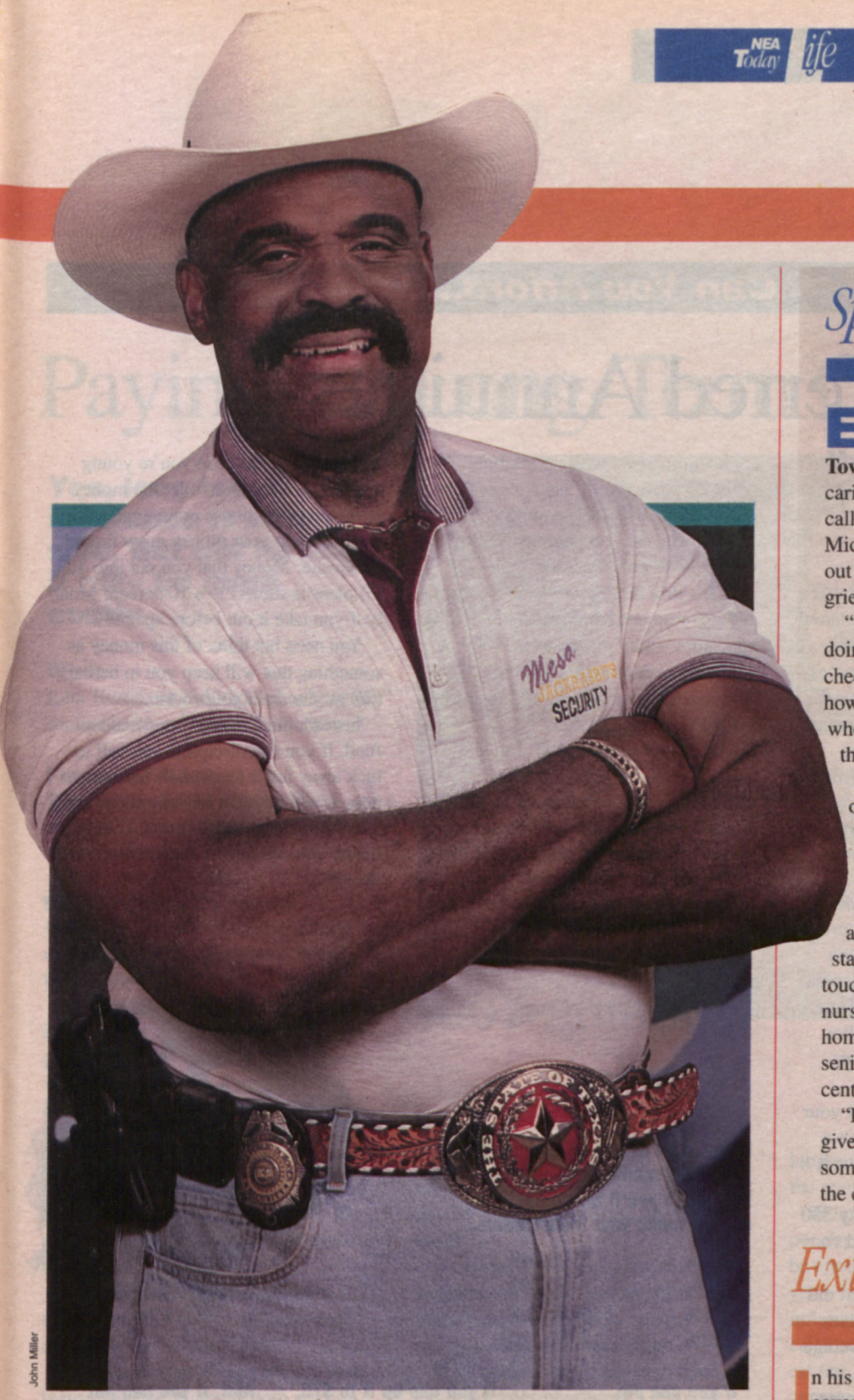
Students still in the building after school cheer on the teachers as they zoom past.

"It's nice for the kids to see us doing something different—and to see us in helmets and pads," Harman says. "If we don't wear those, we'll never get the kids to."

And at the end of a long school day, inline skating is a great stress buster.

"I'll skate, then go home and grade papers for a couple hours, and I'll have a little more energy," Harman says. "It's better than just going home and grabbing a bag of chips."

Jeff Green



John Miller

Big Man on **Campus**

At 280 pounds and 6 feet 3 inches tall—not counting his signature 10-gallon hat—**John Goodie** cuts quite a commanding figure. Still, students at Arizona's Mesa High School consider this pro football player turned school security chief a friend and confidant.

"I'm a big guy, but I speak softly," Goodie explains. "I do not strong-arm anybody, but when I have to take care of business, it's all business."

After playing for two NFL teams, Goodie came to Arizona as an engineer for a defense contractor. When the Cold War ended, so did his job. He turned to Mesa High School—and found his niche.

"My calling is dealing with young people," says Goodie, who's known for his "Goodie Rap" on the virtues of staying in school. "I use a language teenagers understand."

And before each semester ends, he talks more than once to every student—all 2,700 of them.

A frequent community speaker on civil rights and anti-drug issues, Goodie also helps local police with gang prevention.

"I've never been more fulfilled than I am now," he says. "Some kids don't have anyone they can talk to. I'm glad to be that person for many of them."

This summer, Goodie received NEA's Carter G. Woodson Award for mobilizing his community to win back the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday that Mesa voters shot down in 1992.

Special **Delivery**

Even if she has never met you, you can count on **Betsy Townsend** for a kind word and caring thought. Through phone calls and greeting cards, the retired Michigan school custodian reaches out to at least three ill, shut-in, or grieving people a day.

"I spend at least two hours a day doing cards or calling people, just checking up on them and seeing how they're doing," says Townsend, who has sent hundreds of cards in the past year.

To find out who needs a word of encouragement, she combs the obituary page and stays in touch with nursing homes and senior centers.

"People give me some of the cards, and I buy some," Townsend explains, but most are homemade, recycled from bits of old cards by seniors at a center where she volunteers.

Townsend always includes a personal note in the cards, along with her phone number.

"I get so many replies back from people, saying how nice it is to be remembered," says Townsend, who retired in 1988 after 23 years with Grosse Pointe Schools.

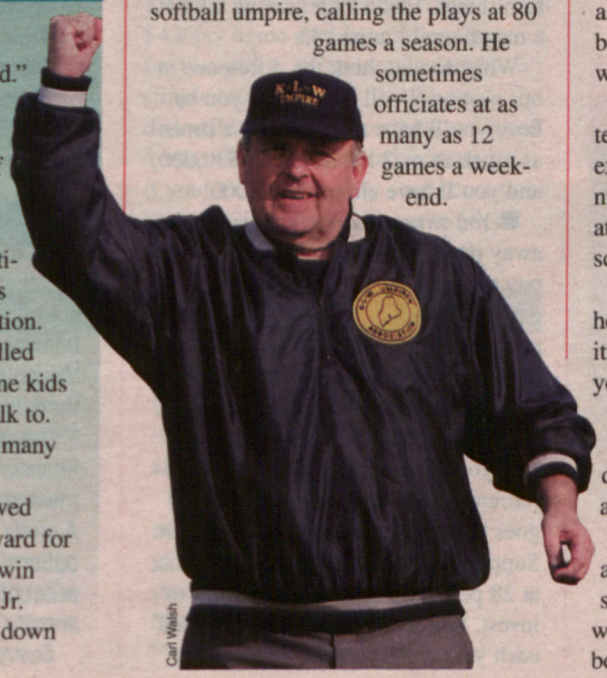
And that's payment enough for her time. "I get a good feeling, knowing that I helped out, that I made someone else feel good," she says.

Robert Chase

Extra **Innings**

In his driver's ed classroom, he covers the rules of the road. On evenings and weekends, he rules while he covers home plate.

For 33 years, Maine teacher **Dennis Wooster** has been a baseball and softball umpire, calling the plays at 80 games a season. He sometimes officiates at as many as 12 games a weekend.



Carl Walsh

Wooster never planned to make such a big commitment. In fact, he fell into umpiring one evening from the sidelines.

"I was standing there watching the kids play when one of the officials asked me, 'Why don't you work the bases for us?' I said okay. Turns out it was fun."

The Medomak Valley High School teacher went on to take the umpire's exam required for officiating in organized leagues. These days, he umpires at Little League, Babe Ruth, and high school games.

"High school is real competitive," he says. "Little League is baseball at its purest, because the players are so young."

Keeping kids involved in sports is what drives Wooster to continue donning his umpire's uniform—even after three decades.

"It gives the kids something to do and keeps them off the streets," he says. "If those kids in high school weren't playing ball, what would they be doing?"

Money

Getting Started

Should I join an investment club?

An investment club is a great way to get started as an investor and to learn about the market.

Perhaps the best way to get involved in a club is to start one yourself. Although it's possible to join an existing club, there's an advantage to starting with a fresh group of people who know about as much as you do.

An investment club pools the money of a dozen or so novice investors who meet once a month, contribute anywhere from $5 to $200 each, and invest the money on the basis of the stock research they do as a group.

As you set up a club, be sure to include people with different backgrounds who will bring their strengths to the stock research. Interestingly, all-women clubs have a better performance record than all-men clubs—but the clubs that include both do best of all.

According to the National Association of Investors Corporation (NAIC), successful clubs:

- Invest regularly without paying attention to whether the market is heading up or down.
- Stay fully invested and reinvest all their earnings.
- Diversify among industries and companies.
- Concentrate on companies whose earnings and sales are growing faster than the overall economy.

To set up a club, join NAIC by calling 248/583-6242 or checking out www.better-investing.org on the Web. NAIC aims to help members double their money in five years.

Did You Know?

. . . that NEA Member Benefits has a new Web site?

Looking for the latest rate for the NEA-Sponsored FDIC-Insured Money Market Account? Debating whether to buy or lease a new car? The brand-new NEA Member Benefits Web site has the information you need, right at your fingertips.

With up-to-date product information, consumer articles, financial calculators, and a powerful search engine, navigating the site is not just easy—it's fun!

Sign on at www.neamb.com today!

Can You Afford...?

Tax-Deferred Annuities

There's a big payoff waiting for those who start saving early.

When you're just getting started in your career, nothing seems so far away as retirement. After all, you need a car, work clothes, insurance. Maybe you dream of buying a home soon. And, hey, what about some money just to fritter away for fun?

Before you shrug off retirement savings, there are a couple of things you should know.

- *If you start saving now—early in your career—you'll need to put away a lot less money.* You may not have much money now, but you have something far more valuable—time. Time can turn a few dollars into a million bucks, thanks to the magic of compound interest.

Compound interest means that your interest earns interest. If you have a long time to let your money grow, it'll do some of the work for you.

Suppose you start putting away $50 a month beginning at age 25 and continue until you retire at age 65. Assume you used an account that did not require you to pay current taxes and that the money earned an average of 8 percent over the years.

Now, suppose I put away the same $50 a month in my tax-deferred account and earned the same thing. But I took care of pressing needs first. I got married, bought a car and then a home and furnishings. I didn't start saving my $50 a month until I turned 45.

What do you think the difference in our nest eggs will be? Would you believe you'll have more than five times as much as me? I'll have just $30,000, and you'll have almost $176,000!

- *You save on taxes.* You can put away money for retirement before you pay tax on it. Your earnings grow tax-deferred, too, until you take the money out of the plan. This tax advantage is worth big bucks. There's more money to compound, for one thing. But you also save on current taxes.

If you put $1,000 in a tax-deferred retirement account, the entire $1,000 goes to work for you, earning interest. Suppose I take my $1,000 and pay tax at 28 percent. I have just $720 left to invest. Further, my earnings are taxed each year at 28 percent, while yours are accumulating with no tax bite. After 20 years, you'll have more than twice as much as me—your $1,000 will grow to $4,700, and my $1,000 will grow to only $2,200.

- *It's practically painless.* Nonprofit and government employees—including educators—may put up to $10,000 per year into a retirement plan that is authorized under section 403 (b) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The beauty of these 403 (b) plans is that the money you contribute is deducted from your paycheck and deposited into the plan before you see it. You save because you pay yourself first.

In most plans, the money you contribute can be invested in a variety of mutual funds. Because you're young and have a long time to let the money grow, you can choose more aggressive funds to help your money grow faster.

Beware: Money that you put into 403 (b) plans is subject to a 10 percent penalty if you take it out before age 59½.

You need not think of this money as something that will keep you in herbal teas as you sit in your rocker.

Instead, think of it as your freedom fund. If you can discipline yourself to tuck away just a few dollars a month now, it will buy you lots of options later. You can plan a second career. You can travel. You can pursue the life of your dreams.

—Mary Rowland

Building Your Nest Egg

If you start at age 25 and put away just $25 a month until age 65, here's how much you'll have depending on how much your money earns:

4%	$ 29,648
6%	$ 50,036
8%	$ 87,857
10%	$159,420

If you can put away $50 a month:		If you can up it to $75, here's what you'll have in 40 years:		And, if you can put away $100 each month and earn 10 percent, you'll be on your way to becoming a millionaire:	
4%	$ 59,295	4%	$ 88,943	4%	$118,590
6%	$100,072	6%	$150,109	6%	$200,145
8%	$175,714	8%	$263,571	8%	$351,428
10%	$318,839	10%	$478,259	10%	$637,678

Resources

Whether you're a new member just starting out, or a veteran member thinking about retirement, the NEA Valuebuilder® Annuity Program is there for you.

Designed to enhance members' financial security during their retirement years, the NEA Valuebuilder Annuity offers 20 variable investment options and two guaranteed interest accounts, along with a fixed-interest annuity.

Savvy investors can monitor their investments with the 24-hour, toll-free Performance Hotline. And you can change your variable investment selections at any time with no charge.

Novice investors can take advantage of free NEA Member Benefits-sponsored seminars provided by the NEA Valuebuilder investment professional in your area.

For more information on the NEA Valuebuilder Annuity Program, call 800/NEA-VALUE (800/632-8258).

How Are You Doing?

Paying for Long-Term Care

Yes, long-term care insurance is expensive. But not having it may be more costly.

Who:
John Board, retired high school social studies teacher, Helena, Montana

Financial Goal:
To avoid the risk of paying out-of-pocket for expensive nursing home or home health care

Game Plan:
Board and his wife started checking out long-term care insurance before his retirement in 1996.

"One of the reasons we looked into it is because of what I watched others go through, particularly a colleague who went through a long bout with cancer," Board says. "We didn't want to risk losing everything we had."

When NEA Member Benefits issued its first long-term care policy, Board asked his financial planner to compare it with the policies of at least three other companies.

"The other companies couldn't match the NEA policy as far as cost and coverage," Board says.

For Board, one of the policy's best features is that it covers both nursing home and home health care.

"I have no desire to spend any time in a long-term care facility if I can avoid it," he notes. "With this policy, I think that if either one of us becomes seriously ill, we'll be able to handle it a whole lot longer at home."

The Experts Say:
Long-term care insurance is a great hedge against the high cost of nursing home care ($40,000 or more for a year-long stay), especially since Medicare and Medigap supplemental insurance policies generally don't pay for long-term care. Medicare covers only short-term skilled nursing home care following hospitalization.

Long-term care insurance isn't necessarily for everyone—and it's expensive. Even if it's right for you, you have to choose your policy carefully.

Many long-term care policies are indemnity policies, meaning that they pay a fixed dollar amount for each day you receive care in a nursing home or at home. However, other, more economical policies reimburse you for expenses incurred, up to a dollar limit.

Frank Shone

The changing health care industry prompted retired Montana educator John Board and his wife to look into long-term care insurance.

How much you'll pay for coverage varies according to how much you buy, where you live, and how healthy you are, as well as such factors as:

- *Your age.* The younger you are, the lower your premiums. Of course, the younger you are, the longer you pay, too. But age 40 to 45 is not too young to start considering a policy.
- *The deductible period.* The deductible or elimination period refers to the number of days you must be in residence at a nursing home, or the number of home services you must receive, before policy benefits begin. Most policies offer a choice ranging from zero to 100 days. A 20-day deductible, for instance, means that your policy will begin paying on the 21st day. The longer the deductible period, the lower the premium.
- *Inflation calculation.* Because the per-day benefit you buy today may not be enough to cover the cost of care years from now, most policies offer an inflation adjustment. Some policies calculate inflation using a simple interest rate, while others use an annual compounded rate. The latter, while ultimately providing you with a higher benefit, is more expensive.

So what's the bottom line? It varies, but let's say you want a policy with a $70/day nursing home benefit, a $40/day home care benefit, coverage for two years, inflation calculated at a simple rate, and a 90- to 100-day deductible period. According to United Seniors Health Cooperative averages, if you're 55, this policy could cost you about $430 annually. If you're 68, it could cost about $1,139 per year.

Resources

Your family is important. Just as you work hard to ensure that your students get a good education in a safe environment, you also work hard to ensure a safe and stable future for your family.

That's why NEA Member Benefits introduced the NEA MemberCare® Long-Term Care Insurance Program.

This valuable program provides NEA members and their families with benefits to help pay for unplanned nursing home or home health care expenses.

To find out how you can help secure your ability to pay for long-term care services for yourself or your parents, call the NEA MemberCare® Long-Term Care Program at 800/884-2675.

Continuing On

How can I find out how much I can expect to receive from Social Security when I retire?

In the past, finding out what your future benefit might be was tricky and often inaccurate. But now the Social Security Administration can easily give you a personalized benefit estimate.

All you have to do is call the SSA at 800/772-1213 and request a Personal Earnings and Benefit Estimate Statement (PEBES), otherwise known as Form SSA 7004.

The form will ask you to fill in last year's actual earnings, this year's estimated earnings, and when you expect to retire.

You'll also have to estimate your future earnings. Be conservative. You may be hoping your income will rise significantly over the next five to 10 years, but don't be unrealistic. Otherwise, your estimated benefit may be way off the mark.

About six weeks after you return the form, you'll receive a report outlining your work history and how much you can expect from Social Security if you retire at ages 62, 65, and 70. (Social Security pays the average retiree about 40 percent of pre-retirement earnings.)

You should review your Social Security record once every three years. If there's a mistake, call SSA and get it corrected right away so your benefits aren't affected.

You should apply for Social Security three to six months before you retire. To sign up, visit your local Social Security office or call SSA's toll-free number.

Retiring Soon?

Thinking about retirement? Don't forget that membership in NEA-Retired offers you a continuation of Association activism, benefits tailored to your needs as a retiree, plus workshops, conferences, and volunteer opportunities.

You'll also receive *NEA Retired* magazine, a bimonthly publication covering Association news and the latest on Social Security, pension, and health issues—as well as feature articles on NEA-Retired members around the country.

Join now as a pre-retired member. Contact NEA-Retired, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 202/822-7149.

KIDS ARE WHY WE CARE ABOUT THIS FALL'S ELECTIONS

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This fall, make sure the candidates who seek your vote measure up — for children and public education.

I WANT YOU TO VOTE!

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My Turn

An Unintentional Hero

NEA member John Gillette died doing something that he loved—teaching.

By Ron Rudler

On April 24, 1998, one of the most senseless acts of violence ever to have occurred in Edinboro, Pennsylvania, claimed the life of my longtime friend and colleague, John Gillette, at the age of 48.

On that day, an eighth grader at Parker Middle School showed up at a school dance with a gun. That troubled student thrust our town into the position of telling an all-too-familiar story—a story that, of course, could never have happened here.

More than 4,000 people attended the funeral, and perhaps millions watched it on TV, hoping to bring some sort of closure to a tragedy that had taken someone they had never even heard of a few days before.

Who was this man whose death touched so many people and raised so many unanswerable questions?

He was John. He was one of my best friends, someone who had loved and lived life to its fullest each and every day. He was husband to Debbie and father to Matt, Brian, and Abby. He was proud of the beautiful, bountiful life he had built.

John was an outstanding science teacher and football coach. Once, before a game, he pulled out a scratchy old record and made his players listen to Walter Winchell's poem, "All About a State of Mind."

If you think you are beaten you are. . . .Sooner or later, the man who wins is the man who thinks he can.

John thought he could do everything, and he imparted that spirit and determination to every single person whose life he touched.

I'm sure John would want us to build something from his tragedy. John was always building.

As a contractor, he helped people construct homes.

As a teacher, he lay the foundation for his students' success.

As a family man, he built a secure, happy life for his wife and children.

We owe it to John—and to others killed and injured on school grounds last year—not to wallow, but to use our strength, determination, and love to rise from this pain and take action that honors our colleagues' and students' memories.

Some people have already started.

A local television stations, in cooperation with the district attorney's office and several area sporting goods dealers, recently sponsored a gun safety campaign called the "Lock 'Em Up" program.

For several weeks, gun owners here and in the surrounding areas were able to get trigger locks and other gun safety devices—at dealers' cost.

If this program prevents only one tragedy from taking place, it will have been a success.

A final thought for the many educators who've begun to question their choice of profession in light of the school shootings last spring: John would have a lot to say to you.

He would tell you to remember why you chose this profession to begin with. It surely wasn't for the money or the fame or the glory.

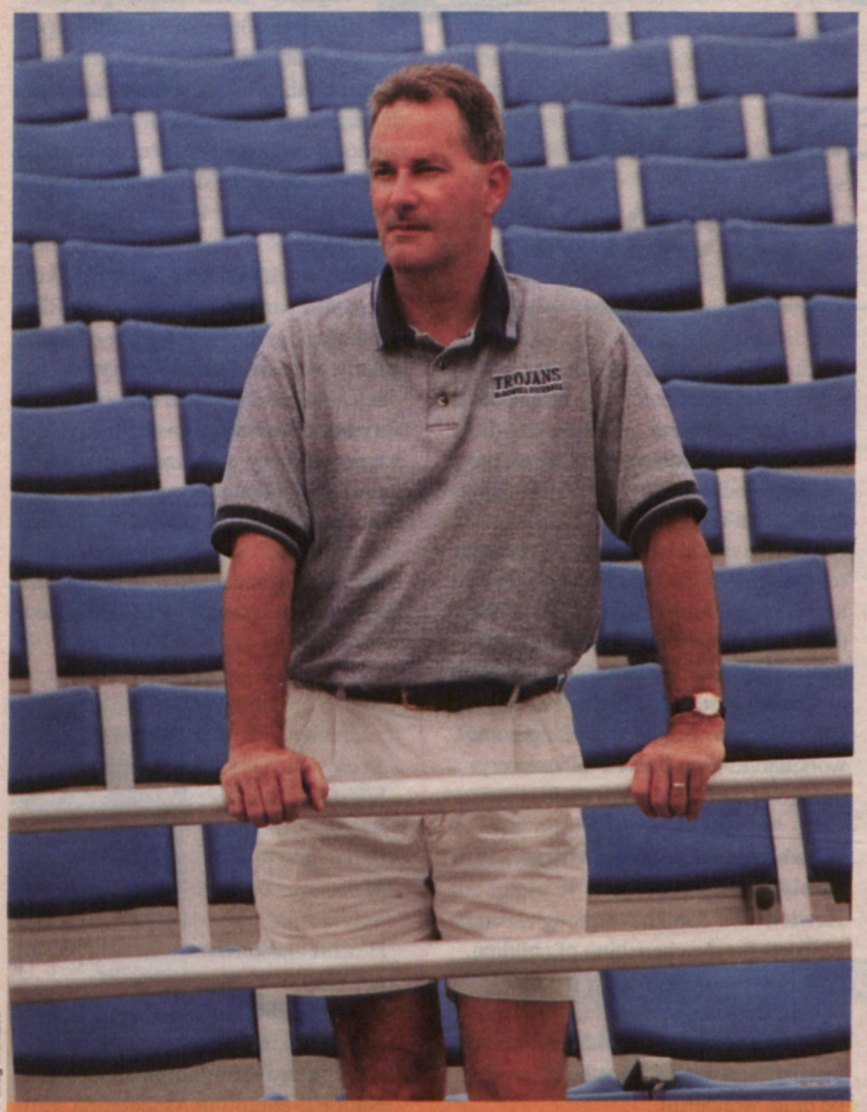
He would tell you that the adversity we've all been dealt isn't permanent—unless we allow it to be.

He would challenge you—individually and collectively—to stand tall and accept the challenges that lie ahead.

He would ask you to remain positive and continue to take pride in doing your absolute best.

Most of all, John would demand that you finish what you started—educating, challenging, and encouraging students to become productive young adults.

Like all teachers, John Joseph Gillette didn't intend to become a hero. But, for all of us who knew him then and know him now, he is one.



Greg Wohlford

NEA member Ron Rudler teaches physical education and coaches football at McDowell Senior High School in Millcreek, Pennsylvania. He can be reached via E-mail at rudler@trojan.mtsd.k12.pa.us.

You Said It

Bill Fischer, editor

If you've scanned this first issue, you've already seen that *NEA Today*'s basic format looks essentially the same as last year's.

And that's intentional. You've told us—in letters, E-mails, and our annual reader survey—that *NEA Today*'s current format suits your needs and interests. In our latest readership poll, some 70 percent of you indicated that *NEA Today* helps you do a better job teaching kids.

That's heartening feedback, but we're aiming to make *NEA Today* even more useful for you this year.

Our biggest change is designed to better address the challenges faced by NEA education support members—paraprofessionals, bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, and all other support staff—as they work to help students succeed.

Starting with this issue, all education support members will be receiving a special *NEA Today* four-page insert that will focus on helping ESP members on the job, with everything from tips on training opportunities to ideas on useful new Web sites.

We've also redesigned several sections of *NEA Today* received by *all* NEA preK-12 members.

Our *Bits & Bytes* pages, for instance, will continue to feature educators who are using technology innovatively, but we've also added more specific suggestions on exciting cyber opportunities you can build right into your instructional planning.

Our *Money* pages sport a new look, too. We've added two new columns. One offers financial advice to young NEA members just starting out. The other addresses the concerns of veteran educators.

Finally, you may have noticed, right at the bottom of our pages, a small icon for *NEA Today* Online, our special new Web site devoted to helping you make the most of your *NEA Today* reading experience.

You'll find in *NEA Today* Online all sorts of information that adds depth and timeliness to our *NEA Today* print coverage. Check us out online. We think you'll like what you see!

Bill Fischer

Meet

Can These Two Mobilize Parents?

With a new book and organizers' zeal, two scholars hope to unite American parents.

In The War Against Parents: What We Can Do for America's Beleaguered Moms and Dads, *economist and parent activist Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Harvard professor Cornel West document a 30-year silent war they claim has made parents "one of the most disadvantaged groups in America" and parenting "a counterculture activity of the first order."*

Hewlett and West speak from research—including a national survey of parents—and from personal experience. Hewlett has five children, ranging in age from one to 20. West has one son, age 20.

NEA Today's Stefanie Weiss spoke with West and Hewlett recently in Washington, D.C.

If you're talking about a war, where are the casualties?

West: The casualties begin with the children—you can see the scars and the bruises—and include their parents, who feel so beleaguered and belittled . . .

Hewlett: . . . and demoralized. We see moms and dads as not just beaten back but very insecure, very unsure of what kind of standing they have in this society, very apologetic. And, of course, society is very punitive. We're always blaming them, like we blame teachers, not understanding how weakly we support either group.

Is it really so much harder to be a parent today than it was 30 years ago?

West: When I grew up, we had more social and communal supports. My father grew up in Jim Crow America,but he had the G.I. Bill, so he had some support for education and buying a home.

Hewlett: Two percent mortgages helped!

West: And there's a big difference between neighborhoods of the old days and 'hoods of our day. Neighborhoods were a loving, caring, nurturing web of support that made you know you were somebody, you were important. Today's kids are isolated, just drifting more and more on their own.

What other factors make parents so "disadvantaged"?

Hewlett: Look at taxes. In the 1950s and early '60s, children were the biggest tax shelter in this country. Social Security taxes were $30 a year, and if you had a couple of kids, you basically paid no income tax. We forget that these days. In the 1980s, taxes on families with children went up 43 percent, while taxes on folks who don't have kids remained stable. That's pretty serious tilting against parents.

Another thing: Take a look at popular culture. Most movies and TV shows in the '90s make parents out to be either fools or monsters, dead or absconded. That makes parents feel that they've been cut down, that they don't have any honor or worth in our culture.

West: What we're saying is that parenting is the ultimate non-market activity. We live in a market-driven society. And, therefore, all non-market values, all non-market activities, are devalued and pushed to the margin.

You surveyed parents. What's on their minds?

West: There was a common thread that cut across race and class and region and religion: 91 percent of parents are concerned about the time crunch—not having enough time to spend with their children. They told us they're overworked and underpaid, they face speedups at the workplace, and they feel that if they only had more flexibility on the job, they could actually come through for their children . . .

Hewlett: . . . and be more involved with school. In 1997, in six million American homes, two adults held four jobs. Now they don't do that for reasons of fulfillment. They feel like hamsters in a wheel —running harder and harder but staying still. They know that supervising homework and turning that TV off are very important, but they're not there.

What would make things easier for parents?

Hewlett: We don't have enough social supports for the cherishing of children. And if we could somehow put that web of care in place, in a world where most adults are working so hard, and pull teachers and parents together, it would be quite wonderful.

Specifically, what supports do parents need?

West: Sylvia and I are thoroughly convinced that the yearly rhythm of work should coincide with the yearly rhythm of the school year for children. And we've got to have quality after-school programs that keep kids out of trouble between 2:30 and 6 o'clock each evening.

Hewlett: We've written a Parents' Bill of Rights that calls for paid parental leave, income supports for parents of children under six, tax incentives for companies that offer flexible hours, a living wage of at least $7 an hour, mortgage subsidies for families making less than $100,000 a year, incentives for parents to vote, tougher divorce laws, affordable child care, trigger locks on guns, and much more.

What's the plan for turning these "parents' rights" into reality?

Hewlett: There are 62 million parents out there. They're not mobilized, and they're not voting. In school districts around the nation, just 12 percent of parents get out there and vote, which is one of the main reasons why budgets at the local level don't reflect kids' needs.

What we're saying is that we'd like to create a parents' movement, AARP-style. Back in the '50s, a third of the elderly lived below the poverty line. They were disrespected, and they were very inactive. And yet we know what happened. They mobilized. They got themselves a common agenda, and now every politician runs scared.

Our research shows that parents have a common agenda, and if they organize, they can amass that kind of power, too.

Resources

- *The War Against Parents: What We Can Do for America's Beleaguered Moms and Dads.* Sylvia Ann Hewlitt and Cornel West. Houghton Mifflin, 284 pp., $24, 800/225-3362.

- For more information about the National Parenting Association, call 800/709-8795.
- To read more of *NEA Today*'s interview with West and Hewlett, go to www.nea.org/neatoday.

Debate

Should Schools Sell Cola Companies Exclusive Rights?

Yes

Dee McNosky, a special education resource teacher at Bedford Junior High School in Texas, has been teaching for 14 years. She's the past president of NEA's affiliate in the Hurst-Euless-Bedford district outside of Fort Worth. That district recently signed a five-year, $1.5 million deal with Pepsi-Cola.

President Kennedy said that a rising tide lifts all boats. That statement, in reference to a growing economy, probably holds true most of the time.

But when it comes time to fund public education, that rising tide is nowhere to be found.

Regardless of the strength of the economy, it's never a good year for local school boards to raise taxes, for states to contribute more aid for public education, or for the federal government to increase the financing of its entitlement programs for our public schools.

Too often, that leaves educators with the task of finding other ways to raise money. To help fund quality public schools here, my district has chosen to sign a five-year, $1.5 million contract with Pepsi.

Check your knee-jerk reactions at the door. This isn't commercialism—it's sponsorship.

Corporate sponsorship exists in almost every facet of our lives. In America today, corporations sponsor everything from symphonies to museum exhibits, bowl games to race cars, Olympic athletes to the Public Broadcasting System.

Why shouldn't corporations become sponsors of public education, too?

Pepsi's sponsorship in my district goes way beyond the promotion of soft drinks. In fact, the Pepsi machines in our elementary schools aren't even available for student use. Instead, elementary students have access to machines that sell only bottled water and fruit juices.

What is available to our students, courtesy of Pepsi, is money for quite a few things that might not otherwise be funded. These include:

- Career-oriented software for our junior and senior high schools.
- A software program for college-bound students that leads them to sources for tuition assistance.
- Discretionary funds that each school's site-based improvement teams will use to achieve the goals they set for their students.
- Money for a local educational foundation that provides grants to fund special projects developed, implemented, and evaluated by educators in the district. In fact, Pepsi's contributing enough money to make the foundation a permanent fixture in our community.

Relationships between corporations and school districts are not a new phenomenon. Many districts purchased Apple computers because of the relationship Apple developed with public schools, or were "adopted" by local businesses that wanted to help out.

Our contract with Pepsi is no different.

Our strong economy has buoyed corporations, but public education has not been lifted by the swell. Since the state of public education affects every segment of society, it's only fitting that corporations use some of their profits to support public schools.

It's important to remember that public schools don't exist *only* for the people who have children in them. They exist for society as a whole—and society as a whole should help maintain their upkeep.

After all, individually and collectively, each of us is a stakeholder in the future of public education. That means corporate America, too.

No

Judy Gump has been teaching in Madison, Wisconsin, for three years. She serves as adviser to Memorial High School's Gay/Straight Alliance and has advised the school newspaper there. Gump's school district was the first in the nation to sign an exclusive $1.5 million deal with Coca-Cola.

On July 21, 1997, the Madison Metropolitan School District became the first school district in the nation to approve an exclusive marketing deal—worth a potential $1.5 million—with Coca-Cola.

Not only does the contract promote a high-sugar, caffeinated beverage that has virtually no nutritional value to children who are then supposed to sit still in a classroom and learn, it also develops a "partnership," between Coke and the Madison public schools.

This "partnership" hinges on promotions designed to bring the Coke logo into our schools and breed a new generation of brand loyal consumers.

As a high school teacher, I don't want that kind of "partner." The idea that our battle-fatigued and underfunded public schools can be any sort of equal "partner" with a multinational corporation would be laughable, if it weren't so insidious.

In Wisconsin, budget caps are responsible for keeping school budgets so tight that our English department can barely afford to replace books, not to mention buy new ones, and contract negotiations are always a drawn out and humiliating affair.

Other districts are even worse off than ours. Who can forget the school in Georgia that, desperate to win a few bucks in prize money, organized "Coke in Education Day," then suspended a student who unveiled his Pepsi T-shirt during the big photo?

It's tempting to think that a district can take the money and run, but the structure of the contract prevents this. This is not just a contract for "pouring rights"—this is a complex vending/marketing agreement, with the kids as the targeted consumers.

In our district, some of the many promotions that were so "generously" offered include software that flashes the Fruitopia logo as often as nine times in 10 minutes, Coke interns who can earn $5 an hour organizing events that promote Coke in the schools, and the ever-popular Coke Teacher of the Year.

These promotions are at the heart of these exclusive marketing agreements. Beverage companies aren't interested in helping our children by funding their schools. They're interested in buying brand loyalty.

Sure, school districts are facing a paralyzing budget crunch. But attempts to fill the budget gaps with short-term, short-sighted, stopgap measures like these exclusive vending contracts only divert attention from the real issue—lack of public funding and lack of political commitment to quality public schools.

Children have the right to a quality education, one that allows them to make choices about their futures. When corporations worm their way into the schools, they make the choices, they set the agenda.

Trust me, I know. In Madison, our school board was unable to resist the lure of this "easy money." Next year, Coke Dollars will be handed out, each high school will have two Coke interns, and several new programs will have been created so Coke can contribute a few dollars and, more importantly, promote themselves in our public schools.

Frankly, I don't want to see the day when my high school's "Fine Arts Day" is replaced by a "Coke in Education Day" because we need a few new desks.

What's Your Opinion?

Should schools sell cola companies exclusive rights?

To vote, visit our Web site at **www.nea.org/neatoday** and see the results instantly.

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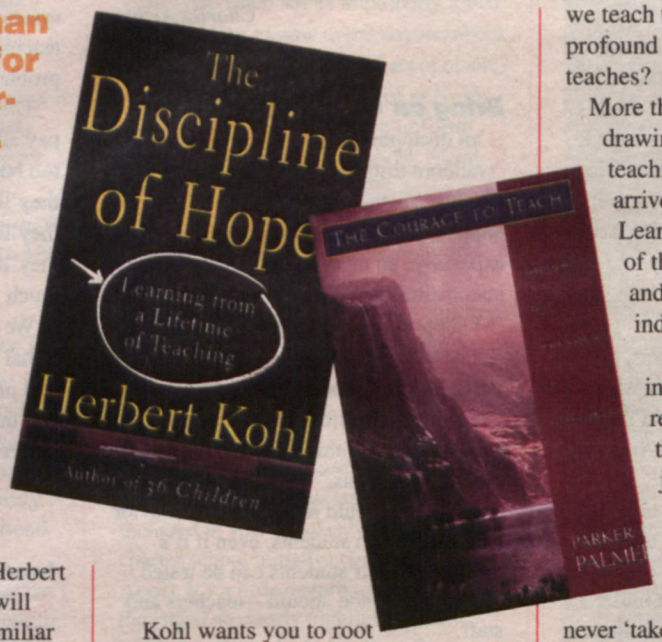

The Discipline of Hope
Learning from a Lifetime of Teaching. Herbert Kohl. Simon and Schuster, 337 pp., $24, 800/421-5565.

The Courage To Teach
Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life. Parker J. Palmer. Jossey-Bass, 183 pp., $22, 800/956-7339.

In recently released books by Herbert Kohl and Parker Palmer, you will hear a new sound. It's not the familiar shout of the zealous reformer. It's a pleasant sound—faint praise, tempered by thoughtful criticism, giving hope and courage to all teachers, the struggling and the confident, alike.

Herbert Kohl, known for his 1964 classic *36 Children*, uses his own diverse teaching experience to convince you that children can learn and that you can teach them.

Kohl challenges you to be "militant and passionate in defense" of children's right to a decent childhood, to be "the hope of a welcoming place for them in the adult world."

Kohl wants you to root out racial bias that obstructs learning and help kids find their "authentic voices." He expects you to work with students to develop creativity and competence together.

Kohl has little time for bitter, defeated teachers or for systems that fail students. As he says in his title, you must discipline yourself to maintain hope—for your own survival and for your students' education.

Palmer sees deeper into teaching than mere mortals are usually allowed. He takes you beyond the traditional questions of what we teach and how we teach to the mostly unasked, yet profound question: Who is the self that teaches?

More theoretical than Kohl and drawing mostly on university teaching experience, Palmer arrives at about the same place: Learning depends on the quality of the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual resources of the individual teacher.

Like Kohl, Palmer says teaching happens in the complex relationships among learners as they explore important subjects.

But Palmer adds two truths that will change the way you look at teaching: "The first is that what we teach will never 'take' unless it connects with the inward, living core of our students lives, with our students' inward teachers."

The second: "We can speak to the teacher within our students only when we are on speaking terms with the teacher within ourselves."

If you refuse to harden your heart and you love learners and teaching, you will see that what Palmer says is natural and valid. And you'll let Kohl's hope and Palmer's courage change you. Your students will be delighted. The reformers will be mystified.

—Bill Harshbarger
History teacher, Mattoon, Illinois

NEA Professional Library Top 10 Bestseller List

1 The Discipline Checklist: Advice from 60 Successful Elementary Teachers. Ken Kosier. ($4.50) Sixty top teachers share their secrets of classroom management and suggestions for motivating today's students. (#2152-5-00-FB)

2 MegaSkills Moments for Teachers. Dorothy Rich. ($9.95) This book shows what you can do to turn everyday problem situations into opportunities for personal and professional growth. (#2006-5-00-FB)

3 Bright Ideas: A Pocket Mentor for Beginning Teachers. Mary Clement. ($4.50) This checklist reveals the secrets of surviving the first year of teaching. (#2153-3-00-FB)

4 How To Get Grants and Free Stuff. NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) Master grant writers share practical tips and winning strategies for getting grants and free stuff for your classroom. (#2914-3-00-FB)

5 Pitfalls and Potholes: A Checklist for Avoiding Common Mistakes of Beginning Teachers. Barbara A. Murray and Kenneth T. Murray. ($4.50) Loaded with practical advice, this Checklist Series booklet for beginning teachers is a great gift for that new colleague down the hall. (#2151-7-00-FB)

6 Countdown to the First Day of School. Leo M. Schell & Paul Burden. ($4.50) A must-have checklist for every beginning elementary school teacher. (#2150-9-00-FB)

7 Inspiring Tranquility: Stress Management and Learning Styles in the Inclusive Classroom. Rebecca Nunn and Janet Gallaher. ($10.95) Two educators use new research findings on how the brain works to create strategies that help teachers and students initiate the "relaxation response" in stressful classroom situations. (#2592-6-00-FB)

8 The First Year Teacher: Teaching with Confidence (K-8). Bosch & Kersey. ($14.95) The ultimate first-year teacher's handbook. (#1862-1-00-FB)

9 Quit It! A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Students in Grades K-3. Merle Froschl, et. al. ($15.95) This comprehensive and practical handbook will help you stop discipline problems before they start. (#1881-8-00-FB)

10 Plants, Animals, and Humid Beans: Fun Tales from NEA Members. ($6.95) Enjoy this heartwarming collection of more than 90 humorous stories from the classroom. (#1880-X-00-FB)

This month's rankings show the NEA Professional Library bestsellers at the 1998 Representative Assembly in New Orleans. All the books listed above are published by the NEA Professional Library, a service for NEA members financed solely by the sale of books and other professional development materials to the education community.

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Books by NEA Members

"I Can't Come to School Today. . . My Mom's in Prison And I Don't Have A Ride." Kathleen Van Antwerp. *Quiet Thunder Publishing, 85 pp., $13.95 plus $2 s&h, 888/642-8794.* An experienced teacher of troubled youth tells their stories and provides specific techniques for reaching, then teaching at-risk children.

The Monkey's Constitution Duncan Brown. *Discovery Enterprises, Ltd., 88 pp., $7.95 plus $3 s&h, 800/729-1720.* This historical novel for middle-graders tells the story of the USS *Constitution*'s 1812 battle against the HMS *Guerrierre* from the perspective of a real 12-year-old *Constitution* passenger.

Show Time! Familiar Plays for Little Actors. Adapted by Diane Head. *Good Apple, 112 pp., $13.99 plus $3 s&h, 800/421-5565.* Budding readers and thespians in grades K-2 can bring classic stories like *Little Red Riding Hood* to life with this collection of scripts. For use by groups of four to six children and a proficient reader.

Music Reviews Quarterly Martin Fullington. *Self-published, 30 pp., $6 per issue to 21 Forest Ridge Dr., Arden, NC 28704, 704/684-2083. Send E-mail to musicrevs@ioa.com.* This quarterly for adults includes reviews of new albums, plus *MRQ on Disc*, a sampler CD suitable for playing in class.

Upon the Tented Field Bernard A. Olsen, editor. *Historic Projects, Inc., 336 pp., $25 plus $4 s&h to 63 Salem Lane, Little Silver, NJ 07739, or call 732/741-0533.* With hundreds of letters written by six New Jersey soldiers and a vast array of photographs, this account of the Civil War challenges Walt Whitman's claim that "the real war will never get in the books."

Letters

A Different 'Unity'

The tragic killings of teachers in Jonesboro and Edinboro have touched all of us. I feel such emptiness in my heart for the teachers' families as they attempt to cope with the loss of their loved ones.

When and where the next at-risk student takes human lives, we don't know. It's time educators nationwide unite to protect ourselves and our families from the devastation these senseless acts of violence create.

I propose establishing a national trust fund in memory of our colleagues. Donations by teachers and the public at-large could be used to pay college costs, mortgage payments, and other expenses of the surviving families. I want to help, to let these people know that we are one big family with a common bond.

Please provide teachers and the public an opportunity and a way to support these families that have lost so much.

Joe Smith
Parkersburg, West Virginia

Editor's note: To honor those lost in Arkansas, send contributions to the Westside Assistance Fund, c/o Union Planters Bank, 300 South Church St., Jonesboro, AR 72401. To honor those lost in Pennsylvania, send contributions to the John Gillette Memorial Fund, c/o James W. Parker Middle School, 11781 Edinboro Rd., Edinboro, PA 16412.

Shame on you. A heroic teacher gives her life protecting her students and all it rates is a brief mention on page seven (Heroes & Zeroes, May)? What did you feel was more important? Six pages on "new unionism." How inconsequential!

It's an insult to this brave teacher and to all teachers who have put themselves in danger to protect children to have this story treated so negligently. Let's have more meaningful stories and less propaganda.

Stephen Shinnick
Norwood, Massachusetts

The society that accepts 100,000 acts of violence as entertainment for its children and in which grief counseling becomes a growth industry needs rethinking.

Why are our schools becoming killing fields? Pressure, stress, violence, and profanity abound in our culture. Childhood as we know it is being destroyed. Simply put, our society is reaping what our culture is sowing.

F. Patrick Kedian
Somerville, New Jersey

A Welcome Tune

Thanks to Linda Arms Gilbert, the music teacher in Tennessee who "teaches to a different tune" and keeps the freshness of music alive in America (Innovators, May).

Reading about her gave me hope that there are other music teachers out there who have chosen to use their special creativity to develop their own music programs, instead of subscribing to the prepackaged materials that seem to be taking over.

Jennifer Badanes
Everett, Washington

Reading's Starting Line

Catherine Snow's comments on "the reading wars" (Innovators, May) illustrate the lack of clear thinking on this subject by many educators.

The key question is not phonics or whole language. It's where do we begin? Do we start by teaching all reading skills right from the beginning or do we simplify things at first? Are there good starting skills that lead more successfully to the full act of reading than others?

The suggestion that we should take the best from every method because reading is a complex task requiring multiple skills and because of wide differences among beginning readers ignores an overwhelming body of research. There's nothing uniquely whole-language about comprehending what is read. A phonics-first approach recognizes the ultimate purpose of reading and the value of children's literature.

Charles Arthur
Portland, Oregon

Bring on the Tests

I'm disappointed that NEA opposes random drug testing for teachers (Rights Watch, May) "because it is unprofessional, degrading, unnecessary, expensive, an invasion of privacy, and unconstitutional."

I support random drug testing of teachers. I feel the strongest anti-drug message I can send to my students is to live a drug-free life. Once I make that choice, I have nothing to fear from random drug tests.

Teachers should model every behavior we expect from students, even if it's inconvenient. If students can be tested, then so can—and should—teachers and staff.

Ramona Lee
Kamiah, Idaho

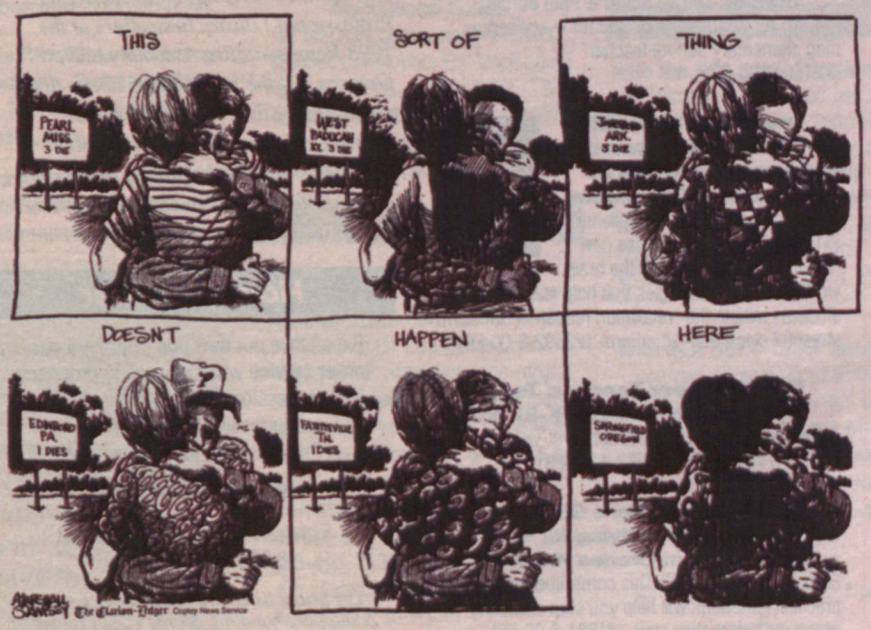
Storm the Supremes?

I see that the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit ruled in a case involving NEA member Margaret Boring that public high school teachers have no right to academic freedom (Rights Watch, May). Boring made the "mistake" of selecting a controversial play for her students to perform in the state drama competition.

Is there any use in mounting a grassroots campaign to get the Supreme Court to review this scary decision?

Anne Holzman
St. Paul, Minnesota

Editor's Note: NEA's Office of the General Counsel has appealed Boring's case to the Supreme Court and is "hopeful" that the Court will take up the case. The Court will make its decision public sometime this fall. Stay tuned.



Problem Students

The reason why our students score lower on tests than students in other countries is not because our educational system is lacking or our teachers aren't teaching (Inside Scoop, May). The problem is with the students.

The majority of them don't study or pay attention in the classroom. They're too busy worrying about what activity they'll be doing after school, what sport they'll be practicing, how many hours they'll be working at their job, or how much money they'll make.

We should stop blaming the educational system, and instead look at the real problem—the attitude of the kids and their parents, and the lack of respect and responsibility of this generation.

Nadine Murphy
Marquette, Michigan

Incoming!

You criticize the Star Wars defense as wasted tax dollars (Bottom Line, May). But with all the third world rogue states who are in the market for ICBMs to launch their VX nerve gas, anthrax spores, and in some cases, nuclear explosives, many knowledgeable people believe we should actually increase the monies spent on a defense against incoming missiles.

What is an education union doing criticizing national defense anyway? What does any of this have to do with teachers' jobs or student learning?

If anything, you should support our missile defense system, since one nuclear explosion will definitely affect the learning environment of the students who are disintegrated or left to die of radioactive poisoning.

Graydon Toms
Wrightwood, California

Learning for Its Own Sake

I was dismayed to read your story on the school-to-work movement (Cover Story, April). I think this type of schooling sends a terrible message to students: that learning is meaningful only when connected to a future job.

We have to be better than that, better than our money-obsessed culture, and show kids that there is more to life than a job, even a rewarding one.

There is the beauty of the natural world, freedom and the history of the struggle to achieve it, the tapestry of diverse cultures, great writers who speak to us from across time, and, yes, boys and girls, there is the immense pleasure of learning for its own sake.

Janette Gerdes
Belleville, Illinois

National Certification

I'm shocked that there is a debate on whether nationally certified teachers

should be paid more (Debate, April). In an occupation where more education is the fastest way to move up the pay scale, how can one say, "You get a raise for your master's, but not for being nationally certified"?

Teachers don't make enough money as it is. Why would our own occupation want to deny teachers more money for receiving more training?

David Caulley
McDermott, Ohio

Crazy IDEA

I just about had to gasp for air when I ready your piece on IDEA (Newsmakers, April). I've never seen so much inaccuracy squeezed into so little space.

Teachers at my school have been terrorized by this legislation. Not only are regular ed teachers forced to attend IEP meetings, but we have been informed that if a regular ed teacher isn't available, we have to cancel the meeting.

As for paperwork, there are so many new requirements, it now takes about an hour to write each IEP. I've had teachers tell me they're seriously considering leaving the teaching profession because they're overwhelmed by the paperwork.

This brilliant IDEA also forces us to include just about all special ed kids in standardized testing. This results in those unfortunate kids just looking at us helplessly during their hours of torment, saying, "I can't read this!" Well, no kidding!

This legislation is a disastrous disservice to both teachers and students. Frankly, I've taught trainable mentally retarded children who could have drafted more intelligent legislation.

Troy Baer
West Palm Beach, Florida

Editor's note: See story on page 9 for the latest on the new IDEA.

Seeing the 'Invisible'

Thank you for the inclusion of and article about Virginia Uribe's work with gay and lesbian students (Innovators, May). Gay and lesbian students and teachers need to see that NEA's resolutions on issues of inclusion really mean something. Articles like this make us sure that our Association means what it says.

Working with this invisible population can sometimes be an act of faith. Teachers and administrators need to be reminded again and again that these kids are in our classes and need to be acknowledged.

John Anderson
Woodbridge, Connecticut

Protecting Children

Teachers who abuse their positions and molest children need to be punished to the full extent of the law (Rights Watch, April). But I'm confused about why schools must be held accountable for teachers' actions if schools know nothing about the situation. If students don't know what to do when adults improperly touch them and don't know to tell anyone about it, why must schools be held accountable?

Our society has its share of perverts and sex offenders, and some unfortunately make it into our schools. More thorough background checks and more education for students on how to handle improper sexual advances should help prevent further problems with these deviants who try to be near our children.

Michelle Buchanan
Denver, Colorado

To the Islands

Hawaii is a small and often overlooked state, so I was pleased to see it included in your article about NEA's charter school initiative (Inside Scoop, April). It's a little disturbing, though, that the island so clearly highlighted and labeled as Oahu, isn't. It's Kaua'i.

Perhaps some of your staff could use a break from the demands of putting together such a comprehensive publication, and I know just the spot—Kaua'i. You won't find any big cities here, nor alas a charter school, just some of the most breathtaking natural beauty to be found anywhere on the planet.

Beryl McClerren
Kaua'i, Hawaii

An Avid Reader Writes

It's disturbing to see a fellow teacher criticize *NEA Today* for promoting books (Letters, April). "I don't know any teachers who have time to do any outside reading," she writes.

I'm appalled! All teachers must read. I make time for books. If we, as teachers, don't take the time to practice what we preach, then we should probably stop whining when the public criticizes us.

The only way to pass on a true love of learning is to love it, too. I appreciate *NEA Today*'s book reviews. Keep it up!

Liisa Potts
Long Beach, California

Let's Talk

Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of five ways:

- By mail: Write to Letters, NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036
- Through the Web: Go to www.nea.org/neatoday and click on "Submit a Letter to the Editor"
- By E-mail: Write to neatoday@nea.org
- By FAX: 202/822-7206
- By Phone: 202/822-7201

Letters are edited for length and clarity.

A Letter from: Mesa, Arizona

Beware the Charter Threat

There's a Grand Canyon-sized problem in Arizona right now that has the potential to send education here back to the horse-and-buggy days of territorialism.

In two words: charter schools.

Now I don't have a problem with the concept of charter schools—public schools that promise to meet student performance goals in exchange for freedom from many state and local rules governing other public schools.

My problem is with the way the Arizona charter school law is written. Here, literally anyone can set up a charter school, collect public money, and be accountable to no one.

As you might expect, since the law passed in 1994, there's been a rush to establish charters here. According to *U.S. News*, 241 of the nation's 800 charters are in Arizona.

As a result:

- *The profession of teaching has taken a huge hit.* Teachers in charter schools here don't have to be certificated. In fact, they don't have to have any appropriate education or background to teach here.

A teacher's aide at my school with no college education left her $6-an-hour job to become a history teacher at a charter school. She's making $16,000—the most money she says she's ever made. Good for her, but what about her students?

Another teacher's aide here, also with no college education, left to open her own charter school. She's now in charge of hiring teachers.

I understand that Arizona's charter law is loosely patterned after a vocational education model—take experts in the field and put them in the classroom.

The problem with that philosophy is that charter schools don't teach auto mechanics and air conditioning repair. They teach children to read, write, do mathematics, and learn social skills. To think that these tasks can be effectively performed by someone with no background and no training is ludicrous.

- *The diversity of the student body is being eroded.* In an effort to get more students, some charters are screening out "troublesome" kids. Many have made it clear they don't want special needs children, either.

Evidence: The Mesa school system spends 12 percent of its funding on special needs children. Arizona's charter schools spend just 1 percent.

One charter school promises its students a Mormon education, complete with Mormon teachers and tutors. Not much diversity there!

- *Public funds are being misappropriated and misused.* Under Arizona's charter law, it's nearly impossible for the state to recover money in the event a charter school fails.

Which happens. The operator of one now-closed charter school used school funds to buy her mother an expensive house in an exclusive area in Phoenix.

- *Resources are being drained from regular public schools, making it harder for us to do our jobs well.* "Charter schools are like any other small business," quipped one state legislator. "A certain percentage is expected to fail."

But with every failure, Arizona's children are being left with less money for education. This year, enrollment at my school dropped significantly. We lost an assistant principal and had less money for classroom supplies.

As charters close and parents wise up, we do get students back. But it's often too late in the year for the money to follow the child. And, often, the children aren't up to grade level in reading or math.

The winds are beginning to shift here, as charter schools close or are closed down. People are more aware that many charters lack educated professionals and accountability. And more legislators are starting to think twice.

Maybe, someday soon, legislators will revise our charter law to assure all students a quality public education, taught by qualified professionals.

Until then, if charter school legislation is pending in your state, I urge you to look to Arizona—for a nearly perfect model of what *not* to do.

A member of the Mesa (Arizona) Education Association, Kim Donohue teaches second grade at Edison Elementary. She can be reached at IEDUK8@aol.com.

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MDV includes taxes and destination fees. Tickets will be Economy class and will be the lowest available published fare at the time of booking. Whenever possible a direct flight will be booked; there is a limit of two connections. Actual date and time of travel are subject to availability. You may select a carrier and/or upgrade to first class travel: If you choose either, you may charge the cost difference to your *Travel Rewards* credit card and earn *Points* for the transaction. Additional terms apply. All reservations and ticketing must be at least 21 days before travel date. All travel must include a Saturday night stay. For international travel, your stay must be at least seven days but no more than 30 days. Other restrictions apply. Common Carrier Travel Accident Insurance coverage is applicable to any airline ticket obtained with *Points* and/or paid for with your *Travel Rewards* credit card. See your card benefits materials for coverage details.

Automobile rental rewards are for **midsize** vehicles with pickup and return to the same rental location anywhere within the United States. Advance reservations of at least seven days are required and are subject to availability. You must meet all credit, age, and driver requirements in effect at the time and place of rental. 2,000 *Points* are needed for each single day rental (MDV: $60, including tax); 1,000 *Points* for a single weekend day rental (MDV: $35, including tax) and 9,000 *Points* for a seven-day rental period (MDV: $300, including tax). Optional charges are your responsibility. Other conditions apply. Your credit card supplemental collision damage waiver coverage is available.

Hotel accommodation rewards are valid at participating properties in the United States. Advance reservations of at least seven days are required and are subject to availability. There is no minimum stay requirement. Rewards are valid for a standard single- or double-occupancy room with a nightly rate, including tax. Personal, optional and incidental expenses are your responsibility. These are the current requirements for a hotel accommodation reward: for a nightly room rate up to $110: 3,000 *Points* and for a room rate up to $200: 5000 *Points*.

The Program has a yearly fee, currently $20. You may accrue an annual maximum of 70,000 *Points*. Your *Points* may not be combined with anyone else's *Points*. *Points* will expire five years from the end of the year in which they are earned. *Points* have no cash value. *Points* may be earned and redeemed only if your account is in good standing.

Earn one *Point* for every dollar of qualifying balances transferred to the *Travel Rewards* account and for every dollar in Net Purchases. To earn *Points*, a balance transfer to the *NEA Travel Rewards* account must be at least $500, and must be accomplished by either an electronic or other transfer of funds initiated by MBNA at your request. No *Points* will be earned for cash advances obtained by the use of access checks. "Net Purchase" means the purchase of goods or services by you and your authorized user (s) with the *NEA Travel Rewards* credit card, less credits and plus or minus any adjustments. Net Purchases does not include finance charges; cash advance transactions (except for qualifying balance transfers); any balance(s) permissibly transferred between MBNA accounts; cash advances redesignated as purchases; the purchase of money orders, wire transfers, bets, lottery tickets, or casino gaming chips; unauthorized charges; credit life insurance premiums; late or over-the-credit-limit fees; and other fees and charges assessed on your account. Fractions of dollar values of Net Purchases will be rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

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The 1998 NEA Support Person of the Year

This year's Support Person of the Year is Carter Foshee, an electrician in Edmond, Oklahoma.

"It's a great honor to win this award," Foshee told participants at the ESP national conference held this spring at the Meadowlands in New Jersey, "and I accept it on behalf of my 300,000 NEA ESP colleagues."

Foshee, who's worked in the Edmond schools for 14 years, is a man with a mission beyond the work he gets paid to do for his school district. Many evenings, you'll find him out organizing workers who aren't represented by any organization.

"We can do more together than apart," Foshee explains, "and the more members we have, the more impact we can have on behalf of kids and school employees."

See **ESP Extra** *inside for more coverage of education support staff making a difference for kids.*

Carter Foshee, an electrician in Edmond, Oklahoma, is the 1998 NEA Support Person of the Year.

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GEICO is rated A++ (Superior) by the A.M. Best Company, leading analysts of the insurance industry. What's more, with GEICO you get the convenience of complete 24-hour service every day of the year.

The choice is yours. You can go on paying high car insurance rates, or you can pick up the phone and call **1-800-841-5660**. Be sure to have your current policy handy, so we can tell you in a matter of minutes exactly how much you could save.

Call 1-800-841-5660, now.

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Use this chart to see what GEICO could save you on your car insurance.

YOUR CURRENT COVERAGE		YOUR CURRENT PREMIUM	GEICO PREMIUM	YOU SAVE
Bodily Injury: _____ Per Person _____ Per Occurrence	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Property Damage: _____ Per Occurrence	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Personal Injury Protection or Medical Payments: _____ Per Person	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Uninsured Motorists: _____ Per Person _____ Per Occurrence _____ Property Damage	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Comprehensive (Your Car): _____ Deductible	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Collision (Your Car): _____ Deductible	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Rental Reimbursement: _____ Per Disablement	CAR 1			
	CAR 2			
Government Employees Insurance Co. • GEICO General Insurance Co. • GEICO Indemnity Co. • GEICO Casualty Co. These shareholder-owned companies are not affiliated with the U.S. Government. GEICO auto insurance is not available in MA or NJ. GEICO: Washington, DC 20076.		GEICO SAVES YOU THIS MUCH....		$

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